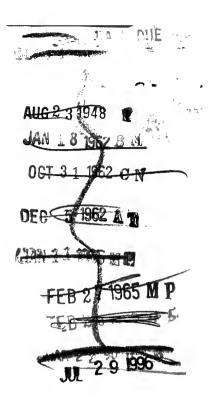


Cornell Aniversity Library

THE GIFT OF

The Philosophical Review

A.87275 12/12/95





B 358 787 1895 V. 1



1.31. N. Y.

SELECTIONS FROM PLATO

JOWETT AND KNIGHT

London

HENRY FROWDE

Oxford University Press Warehouse Amen Corner, E.C.



Mem York

macmillan & co., 66 fifth avenue

A SELECTION PRIVILETTY

OF

PASSAGES FROM PLATO

FOR ENGLISH READERS

FROM THE TRANSLATION BY

B. JOWETT, M.A.

LATE MASTER OF BALLIOL COLLEGE
AND REGIUS PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTIONS

BY

M. J. KNIGHT

VOL. I ,

Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1895



A. 87275

Oxford

PRINTED AT THE CLARENDON PRESS BY HORACE HART, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

PREFACE

The following collection of 'Extracts from the English translation of the Dialogues of Plato' was undertaken by the editor in accordance with the wish of the late Master of Balliol. The Master himself helped to choose the passages for insertion, and the larger portion of the MS. was submitted to him before his death. He was of opinion that the selection would be of value to readers who might be deterred by the size and cost of the complete work, as well as to young students; while the University Extension movement, and the increasing number of Colleges for Women, both in England and America, also seemed to offer a field for a compilation of this nature.

The editor, with such readers in view, has in the brief introductions prefixed to the Extracts endeavoured to assist them to gain a general understanding of the character of the Platonic writings, which may, if occasion serve, provide a useful basis for further study. So, too, the metaphysical part of Plato's philosophy has been kept in the background, attention being drawn especially to the political and ethical ideals which form a great part of his teaching, and which, like the simple truths of religion, have a peculiar and undying attraction for ourselves.

The Preface which Professor Jowett contributed to Mr. Purves' 'Selections from the Dialogues of Plato' has at his own desire been added to these volumes.

Brading, Isle of Wight.

March 1895.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I

	PAGE
Preface to Mr. Purves' Selections	жi
THE LIFE OF PLATO	xxxiii
Events of Greek History, B. C. 432-348	хххуі
Charmides:	
Socrates prescribes for Charmides' headache (156 $D-157C$)	1
Lysis:	
We only trust those who appear to know more than ourselves (206 E-210 C)	3
Laches:	
(1) The art of fighting in armour is useless to the soldier (182 E-184 C)	ç
(2) The harmony of words and deeds (188 C —189 B) .	12
Protagoras:	
(1) The Sophists at the house of Callias (314 B-316 A).	13
(2) Protagoras tells the story of Prometheus and Epimetheus (320 D—322 D)	16
(3) The education of a Greek child (325 C-326 E)	19
Euthydemus:	
The doctrinaire Politician and the true Philosopher (304 B-to end)	21
CRATYLUS:	
The significations of the various letters (426 B-427 C).	25

Phaedrus:	
(1) The philosopher must study the nature of man (229	PAGE
A-230 A)	29
(2) The banks of the Ilissus (230 B—E)	32
(3) The Soul described under the figure of two winged horses	
and a charioteer: her wanderings and transmigrations	
(245 C-256 E)	33
(4) The Art of Rhetoric	51
(a) The True Orator (269 E—272 C)	52
(b) The tale of Thamus and Theuth (274 C-275 C)	55
(c) Speech better than writing (275 D-277 A)	57
(d) The true art of composition (277 B-278 D)	59
Ion:	
The Inspiration of the Poet (533 C—536 C)	б2
Symposium:	
The character of Socrates	67
(1) Socrates' fit of abstraction in the Porch (174 A-175 C)	68
(2) His strange appearance and marvellous power of in-	
fluencing others (215 A-216 C)	70
(3) His endurance, eccentricity, and bravery (219 E—222 A)	72
Meno:	
The Immortality of the Soul proved from the Doctrine of	
Recollection (ἀνάμνησιε) (81 A—E) .	-6
reconcendit (wraperjoss) (31 11—12)	76
Apology, or the defence of Socrates:	
The whole	77
CRITO, OR SOCRATES IN PRISON:	
The whole	113
Phaedo, or the last day of Socrates' life:	
(1) Socrates in Prison (57—60 C)	131
(2) Why the Philosopher is willing to die, although he will	-0-
not take his own life (60 C—69 E)	135
(3) The Description of the Other Life (107 C—115 A)	150
(4) The Death of Socrates (TTE A—to end)	150

GORGIAS:	
(1) The good man desires, not a long, but a virtuous life	PAGE
(511 A - 513 A)	167
(2) The Judgment of the Dead: the Moral of the Tale	
(523 A—to end)	171
Alcibiades I:	
Socrates humiliates Alcibiades by showing him his inferiority	
to the Kings of Lacedaemon and of Persia (120 A-	
124 B)	178
Alcibiades II:	
The Gods approve of simple worship (148 B—150 B) $$.	185
Eryxias:	
The nature of money (400 A—E)	189
Parmenides:	
The meeting of Socrates and Parmenides at Athens. Criticism of the Ideas (126 A-136 C)	192
Theaetetus:	
(1) Socrates, a midwife and the son of a midwife (150 A—	
151 D)	208
(2) The Lawyer and the Philosopher (172 B-177 C)	211
Sophist:	
The pre-Socratic Philosophers and their puzzles (241 D-	
246 D)	219
Statesman:	
The Reign of Cronos (268 D—274 E)	229
Philebus:	
The first Taste of Logic. The Art of Dialectic (15 D-17 A)	220

PREFACE TO MR. PURVES' SELECTIONS

. . . . This little work is not designed, like Ritter and Preller's book of extracts, to be an 'Historia Philosophiae e fontium locis contexta.' The object of the editor has been literary rather than philosophical. He has not attempted to set forth the philosophy of Plato in regular order, though in any selection from Plato something of his idealism may be expected to appear. He would be far from wishing to encourage any premature study of philosophy. But before the time has arrived for abstract thought, the young scholar may with advantage make himself acquainted with the style of Plato in its most perfect form; he may gather choice flowers of poetry and fancy; he may grow familiar with the wonderful portrait of the Silenus Socrates (Symp. 215 A), who is the central figure of the Platonic dialogues. Some part of the meaning may slumber in his ear: but he will fill his mind with beautiful passages while the imagination is strongest and the memory most retentive. And when hereafter

he reads them in their context, and a new light is thrown upon the page, he will 'rejoice in recognizing' his old friends: he will return to them with increased interest, perceiving that there was more in them than he thought (Rep. iii. 402 A).

It is the misfortune of all books of extracts that they take the gems out of their setting, and therefore do a kind of injustice to a great writer. The higher beauty and excellence of any writing is necessarily impaired in detached passages. When the fruit is plucked from the tree and put into our hands, there is a loss of freshness or fragrance. But the objection is more than counterbalanced by the advantage of introducing youth at an early age to the writings of a master. The very fragments of Plato have a finish and perfection to which no modern writings can compare. They are fruits which even the youthful scholar perceives to be of a different flavour from Xenophon or Lucian. Living as he did at the convergence of two literary periods, Plato may be truly called at once 'the last of the poets and the first of prose writers.' As Cicero says of his Dialogues, though not himself an imitator of them. 'Poema magis putandum quam comicorum poetarum.' Plato alone of all writers, ancient or modern, has imparted to philosophy the glory of style.

Everything is best learned at the right time and in the natural order. As Aristotle tells us, in a well-known passage of the Nicomachean Ethics (I. iii. §§ 5-8), 'the young man is not a good hearer of Ethics.' He may think too much as well as too little. The Socratic 'pang of philosophy,' that is to say, the fascination of abstract ideas, may easily interfere with the growth

of the mind in youth or in early manhood. Poetry, language, physical science, mathematics, the works of great writers—Greek, Latin, or English—are a much better basis of education than metaphysical philosophy. They are 'the land of health' in which Plato would have the youth of his city reared: where beauty, 'the effluence of fair works, will visit the eye and ear, and insensibly, like a fresh breeze from a purer region, will draw the soul, even in childhood, into harmony with the beauty of reason.' (Rep. iii, 401 C.) '... He who has received this true education of the inner being will most shrewdly perceive omissions or faults in art and nature, and with a true taste, while he praises and rejoices over and receives into his soul the good, he will justly blame and hate the bad, now in the days of his youth, even before he knows the reason of them.' Whereas the tendency in young men to abstract thought is apt to wither the imagination and to dry up the interest in facts. There is a danger, as Plato also foresaw (Rep. vii. 539 B), 'lest they should taste the dear delight too early . . . and get into a way, violently and speedily, of not believing anything which they believed before, . . . like puppy dogs, eager to tear and pull at all who come near them. But when a man begins to be older he will no longer be guilty of such insanity.'

We reject then any notion of making this book an introduction to the system of Plato. Yet there are a few points to which the reader's attention may be called, with the view of removing misconceptions, and of making intelligible and interesting what would otherwise appear fanciful and unmeaning. These points are:—

- (i.) The dramatic character of the Platonic dialogue.
- (ii.) The popular and half poetical conception of the Platonic ideas.
- (iii.) The true origin and meaning of them.
- (i.) The Dialogues of Plato exhibit philosophy in the form of a drama. Socrates is the protagonist or chief actor; around him are ranged the inferior persons upon whom he exercises his magic art of dialectic. is the statesman, the general, the rhetorician, the poet, the man of the world, the geometrician, the ingenuous youth, the philosopher of a former generation, who are detained by the spell which Socrates exerts over them, and made to give an account of themselves and their callings. There are Sophists, great and small, who, unlike Socrates, are ready to sell the gift of knowledge for money. There is the contrast of different ages and of different pursuits or professions; above all, of sophistry or pretended knowledge with truth or real knowledge. The true knowledge never is, but is always on the point of being, discovered; as if Socrates thought that the search after truth was a greater good than the possession of it. Yet the enquirer never loses hope, but is ready to renew the argument on another day with untiring energy. The different states of Hellas - Athens, Crete, Lacedaemon, Elis, Leontini, Cyrene, Elea-furnish interlocutors, and give something of a local colouring to several of the dialogues. Elaborate studies are made of the two great Sophists. Gorgias and Protagoras, who, although secretly ridiculed, are treated with an outward respect befitting their name and fame. A greater and more genuine admiration is

shown towards Parmenides, 'venerable and awful' (Theaet. 183 E). Anaxagoras is spoken of with mixed feelings; he was the former master of Socrates, who had been wonderfully delighted at his first utterance of the word 'mind,' and not less disappointed by the inconsistent use which he made of it (Phaedo 97; cp. Arist. Met. i. 4. § 5; also Cratyl. 409). For some reason or other Heracleitus and his disciples, and also probably Democritus, whose name is not mentioned. are represented in ludicrous and repulsive colours (Soph. 242). One of the most amusing passages in Plato is the description of the Heracleiteans, or 'patrons of the flux,' who, 'in accordance with their text-books, are always in motion, . . . who grow up anyhow and get their inspiration anywhere, each one of them saying of his neighbour that he knows nothing,' &c. (Theaet. 180; cp. Cratyl, 402).

The dialogues open with chance remarks, as of friends meeting and renewing acquaintance, not with any formal statement of a philosophical thesis. The scene and the occasion are generally described in the beginning of the dialogue, and sometimes alluded to in the course of it. The plane-tree on the little stream of the Ilissus in the Phaedrus (229): the family circle of Cephalus at the Piraeus (Rep. i. 328), whither Socrates and his disciples had gone by invitation to witness the torch race: the banquet at the house of Agathon, to which the Master came perfumed and sandalled (Symp. 174 A): the reunion of philosophers and their followers which Callias had assembled round him (Prot. init.): the opening of the Parmenides, in which that rather perplexing discourse is said to be

recited by the youth Antiphon, who had given up philosophy for horses—these and many similar prefaces carry the art of description to the highest point. They are as graphic as any modern narrative of Fielding or Defoe. 'O Socrates, you can easily invent tales of Egypt or of any other country,' is the natural exclamation of one of his auditors (Phaedr, 275 B). Several of the greatest dialogues, such as the Theaetetus, Phaedo, Republic, Parmenides, are narrated dramas; a form which has been adopted, apparently, with the view of enabling the writer to introduce descriptive remarks. Thus in the Phaedo many beautiful traits are thrown in by the narrator, such as the calmness of Socrates amid the cries of the women (60) and the tears of his own disciples: the manner in which he 'used' to play with the locks of Phaedo (80 B): the dejection of the company at the temporary failure of the argument (88 C): the regard for others and regardlessness of self which is displayed by Socrates in his last hours (116, 117). These little circumstances could not have been communicated to us had there been no eyewitness of the scene.

All the characters are only playthings in the hands of Socrates, who by his superior power elicits from them any conclusion which he pleases. He has talked all his life, and never was overcome by any man in an argument (Symp. 213 E). It may be remarked that in the later dialogues, especially in the Sophist, Statesman, and Laws, the dramatic character becomes feebler, and Socrates either disappears, as in the Laws, or is subordinated to other unknown persons, as in the Sophist and Statesman, apparently because Plato felt that he was

passing out of the sphere of Socratic teaching into another region of thought. But in the dialogues which are most perfect in form, such as the Protagoras, Euthydemus, Phaedo, Phaedrus, Symposium, Theaetetus, Republic, Socrates is the centre of the argument. The rest of the company are either delighted auditors (Symp. 215 C), or the victims around whom he slowly and surely winds his toils (cp. Rep. i. 345, 349; Gorgias 461–481).

10

The character of Socrates himself is exhibited by Plato in a great variety of lights; no other man ever equalled or approached this wonderful mortal: First. in his outward appearance and behaviour, as he describes himself in the Theaetetus and is described by Alcibiades in the Symposium—the man-midwife who brought to the birth the thoughts of men (Theaet. 140); the Silenus mask, which, when opened, revealed the images of gods within (Symp. 215 A); the fluteplayer and Satyr Marsyas, who drew men after him by the power of his voice; the gad-fly given by God to the Athenian people, which, like a noble steed tardy in its motions owing to its very size, was stung by him into life (Apol. 30 E). He is not one 'who has seen many cities,' which was the fond fancy of later ages respecting the old philosophers, who were deemed to be 'learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.' His desires are all bounded by Athens and the Piraeus. As he tells us in the Phaedrus (230 C), 'he searched into his own strange nature,' wanting to know 'whether he was a wonder more complicated and swollen with passion than the serpent Typho, or a creature of a gentler and simpler sort, to whom nature has given

a diviner and lowlier destiny.' To such a mind the fairest scenes of outward nature had no beauty or interest. 'The men who dwell in the city were his teachers, not the trees nor the country.' During his whole life he had quitted Athens three times only, once when he was present at the battle of Delium, again when he went on a military expedition to Potidaea, and once again to Amphipolis (Apol. 28 E; Symp. 219-221). Of his early years nothing is known to us: though for a time he was a hearer of Anaxagoras, no previous thinker left any mark upon him. Obeving the inspiration of his own mind, 'whither the word within him led he followed' (Rep. iii, 394 D). From early manhood to old age he passed his time in argument and conversation with his fellow-citizens

To the Athenians his teaching and behaviour appeared strange: nor to ourselves does he seem always perfectly rational. He would stand for a day and a night lost in ecstasy: this strange condition had overtaken him in the camp at Potidaea; and some 'Ionians out of curiosity brought out their mats and slept in the open air, that they might watch him and see whether he would remain all night. There he stood until the following morning, and with the return of light he offered up a prayer to the sun and went his way' (Symp. 220). At a banquet he was the best of company. and able to drink more wine than any other guest without becoming intoxicated, though generally the most abstemious of men (Symp. 214 A). At the battle of Delium after the defeat he seemed to 'keep his head' better than the generals, and went about the field of battle 'stalking like a pelican and rolling his

eyes,' as was his manner, according to Aristophanes (Symp. 221 B; Arist. Clouds 3611), when walking in the streets of Athens; at the same time he made it clear to everybody that they had better not meddle with him (Symp. 221). The singularity of his character seemed also to go beyond the ordinary limits of human nature. Though he was always talking to his fellow-men, there was a mystery about him which they were unable to penetrate. He might appear to be the most rational of men; but there was likewise in him a supernatural or irrational or divine element. He said that he had a sign from heaven, which never commanded him (see Apology 31 C, 40 A) to do or say anything, but often forbade him to go out of the house, it might be, or to make a speech in his own defence, and where there was no interference he went on with what he was about (Apol. 40 B). He especially notes that on the occasion of his trial, when there 'had come upon him what is generally thought to be the last and worst evil, the oracle made no sign of opposition, either when he was leaving his home or when he was ascending the tribune. or while he was speaking, at anything which he was intending to say.' This internal monitor which forbade, but never commanded, was called in after ages the 'Demon of Socrates,' but by Plato, and therefore probably by Socrates himself, was always spoken of in the neuter as the 'Divine Sign' (τὸ δαιμόνιον σημείον), which, as he says, had rarely, if ever, been granted to any other (Rep. vi. 496 C). He speaks of it always in the most familiar manner as an undoubted fact, but without pretending that it revealed to him any mysteries

¹ ότι βρενθίει τ' έν ταῖσιν ύδοῖς καὶ τὼφθαλμὰ παραβάλλει.

or communicated to him any general truths or principles, or even gave reasons for the prohibitions which it imposed upon him,

The strange being who went about in the streets of Athens talking to his fellow-citizens was a puzzle to other men as well as to himself. He was the most humble and also the most self-asserting of human beings: the wisest, always professing to be the most ignorant: the most sceptical and also the most religious: the ugliest and the most fascinating. Around him were gathered his disciples and friends; all who were curious in the pursuit of knowledge were attracted by an irresistible impulse. In a city numbering twenty or thirty thousand families, there was probably no one to whom he was not known, and in his long life he must have become acquainted with nearly every Athenian citizen. Any day he might be seen barefoot (Phaedrus 229 A) and meanly clad; yet also on some rare occasion he would be met by an admiring disciple, gay and sandalled and fresh from the bath, on his way to a banquet (Symp. 174 A). The snub-nose and projecting eyes (Theaet. 143 E. 144 D) would have been at once recognized even by a stranger passing him in the street. In the group which surrounded him would be found the greatest men of Athens-the magnificent Callias, who had spent more money on the Sophists than all other Athenians (Apol. 20 A); Alcibiades the favourite, and yet the terror, of the Athenian people, the 'young lion whom they should either never have reared or never have banished from his native city' (Arist. Ran. 1431); Critias and Charmides, traitors of a deeper dye and still more dishonoured in history; Xenophon, the

leader of the Ten Thousand: Plato, the great genius in whose writings his own words were to live; probably Aristophanes, who may have gone to parody and caricature, yet, according to Plato, remained into the morning hours whilst Socrates was discoursing of the unity of tragedy and comedy (Symp. sub fin.); Agathon the tragic writer, and others, such as Meno the Thessalian nobleman, Callicles the Athenian 'man of the world,' Evenus, poet and sophist, Aristodemus the shadow or inseparable attendant, Apollodorus the 'madman,' whose ways were known to them all, and who is present both at the banquet and in the prison scene—these all might be drawn by the bait of his discourse, to use his own image, 'like hungry cattle following the bough,' all round Athens and into the neighbouring country (Phaedrus 230 E). And wherever he was, the conversation came round sooner or later from the trifling talk of the market-place to the concerns of a man's soul (Laches 187 E).

The Dialogues of Plato represent a few fragments of the infinite discourses which Socrates, out of his abundance, poured forth daily to the crowd of Athenian citizens who followed him in his walks. He assumes in them the character of a learner rather than of a teacher, partly out of irony, but he also seems to have believed that knowledge could only be attained by the united efforts of his own mind with that of others. Theaetetus, as he says, is 'the bag' out of which he produces arguments. Though at times over-mastered by his own wild humour (Cratylus 396), he has a very serious purpose, which is to convert the world, not by preaching, but by talking to them. He is at the same

time a delightful companion; the play of fancy mingles with the deep things of philosophy. He is also the politest of men, and knows how to make cutting and disagreeable remarks in the most courteous and wellbred manner. Towards the Sophists and towards all his opponents he is full of deference; he cannot be too civil to Thrasymachus in the Republic. Even in the Euthydemus, which of all the Platonic dialogues is the most humorous, Socrates, amid a perfect storm of cries and laughter, keeps his countenance to the end of the dialogue. The mask at length clings to the face; the irony becomes reality when he professes in the Apology (30 A) to have a divine mission, which is that of proving to his contemporaries that they know nothing. As Christian teachers have sought to convince the world of sin, so he sought to convince men of ignorance and error. His assumed deference for others may be described as a sort of parody of the Christian virtue, humility. He seems to have supposed that this duty of teaching, or rather of refuting error, was imposed upon him by the Oracle of Delphi, which declared him to be the wisest of men (Apol. 21). For what could the oracle mean by such a declaration? He was conscious that he knew nothing; and he must refute the God by finding some one who knew more than himself. But there was no one; and so he concluded at last that he was wiser than other men, because he alone knew that he knew nothing; they were ignorant of their very ignorance. If we translate his meaning into the phraseology of a later age (for the intellect and the will were not yet distinguished in the time of Plato), we might say that it was an intellectual rather than a moral

change which he wanted to effect. To him virtue was knowledge; if a man knew what was right he would certainly do it. His mission was analogous to that of a Christian Apostle, not the same with it. Like St. Paul, he would have said, 'Woe is me, if I speak not the truth which has been committed to me.' But the subject of his preaching would have been, not the conversion of the heart, but the enlightenment of the intellect.

He tells us that the detection of pretended knowledge was to the listeners extremely amusing, though to those upon whom he exercised his art, in the highest degree irritating. For forty or fifty years he was a teacher and also a satirist of men, going from one class to another in the hope of obtaining true knowledge, but only finding the greatest professors to be the most shallow (Apol. 22). He made enemies of them all: at length the odium which accumulated against him became too great, and he was put to death. The wonder is not that the Athenians should have at last grown impatient of him, but that they should have endured him so long.

(ii, iii.) The true character of the teaching of Socrates is best illustrated by his own oft-repeated profession, to which allusion has just been made, 'That he knew nothing of himself, but only brought to the birth the thoughts of others' (Theaet. 150). In modern language he may be said to have taught men to think for themselves. He did not merely bring knowledge to them from without,—that might be the employment of sophists or schoolmasters: he sought to create in them a new

sense, to implant an eye of the soul 'more precious far than ten thousand bodily eyes' (Rep. vii. 527 E), which might guide them through the maze of phenomena. He turned outwards into the light of consciousness the truths which were implicit or latent in them; he drew conclusions from premises which were already acknowledged by them. They were in the habit of calling one another good and bad, just and unjust; but what was just in one place or at one time or to some one person was deemed unjust at another time or place or to some other person. Socrates would have them pass out of this halflighted world of contradiction and appearance into the sphere of absolute knowledge: they were to ask, not what is just at Athens or Lacedaemon, but what is right and just everywhere and at all times. Thus men began to acquire moral ideas as distinct from legal and political —universal principles liberated from particulars of sense. The clouds of mythology passed away; and firm land appeared.

In a well-known passage of Aristotle (Metaph. xii. 4) there are said to be two things of which the discovery may be truly attributed to Socrates: (i) Induction; and (ii) General Definitions. He means by the first the process of eliciting from one or more instances the general notion which is common to them all. From things known, things unknown were inferred, what was implied became explicit, what was latent and unconscious was brought out into the light of consciousness—this was the process of dialectic. When by methods of comparison and rejection a general notion had been obtained, another question arose, 'how this general notion was to be defined;' or rather the

two processes went on together until a definition or description was obtained, which was no longer open to objection. The making of such definitions, e. g. of courage, temperance, friendship, knowledge, &c., is the aim of several of the earlier Platonic Dialogues. The question 'What is justice?' is the thesis proposed, and partly answered, in the first four books, of the Republic.

The General Definitions of Socrates reappear as the Ideas of Plato. In the pre-Socratic age mankind were struggling towards new modes of conception. persons of mythology, the abstractions of number, the four elements, began to acquire a new significance to them. These seemed to supply the universal form of which they were in so much need; they were opposed to the 'seemings' of opinion, to the 'fleeting particulars' of sense. One generation or school of philosophy was engaged in realizing the meaning of the words 'being and not being,' first and most indispensable of abstractions: another in eliciting out of opposites the simple ideas of relation and motion. The conception of numbers, no longer, as in the childhood of the world, identified with outward objects, but separated from them, now became the great Organon of nature and a symbol of things higher still. He who first uttered the word 'mind' (Anaxagoras) appeared to be 'a sober man among drunkards' (Arist. Met. i. 3). By a great mental effort of some philosopher, each of these notions was for the first time conceived: they were repeated with endless iteration by his disciples (Theaet. 179 D): at length the word of the Master diffused by his school passed into language, never afterwards to lose its place in human thought. A whole philosophy was contained in a few enigmatic sentences; as Plato says in the Sophist (243 A), 'the ancients went on their way rather regardless of whether people like ourselves understood them or not.' (There are modern as well as ancient philosophers to whom this remark may be applied.)

Nor was it to be expected that when first discovered the true nature of ideas or universals would be perfectly understood even by Socrates himself. To Plato they seemed to exist apart from the things which we see in a heaven of their own, and to partake of the Divine. They were unchangeable, but the world was full of shadows always coming and going,-dull and imperfect reflections or expressions of something beyond themselves; and in each individual there was contained an element or seed of the ideal. As Plato represented the matter: A bed or any other work of art could only be made after the pattern of a bed existing previously in the artist's mind: this pattern could not have been derived from beds which are seen, for it was more perfect than they, and must therefore have been recovered by recollection from a former world (Rep. x. 596; Meno 82-86; Phaedo 73-77). According to one view numbers were interposed between ideas and visible things (Arist. Metaph. i. 6); they were the intermediate links by which the two were connected. And as the visible itself was only a shadow in this lower world it had also a shadow of its own. Thus arose four kinds or degrees of knowledge to which four classes of objects corresponded, (1) things in themselves, gathered up into the Idea of Good, which is the Divine essence and first and final cause of them: (2) numbers and relations of number: (3) objects of sense which are the outward aspects or shadows or reflections of the ideas ordered and distinguished by number: (4) the shadows of such objects which are the fancies and creations of man, the world of poets and mythologers twice removed from the true, said also in a figure to 'be seen by a light from behind on the wall of a cave or den,' as the ideas are by the light of the sun or the idea of good. (Rep. vi. 509 ff.; vii. 514 ff.; x. 597, 602.)

This is what may be called the popular theory of the Platonic ideas, gathered chiefly from the Republic. the Phaedo, and the Meno. And it is against this form of them that the assaults of Aristotle are mainly directed. first in the Ethics, and then with greater minuteness of detail in the Metaphysics. All his objections, which are innumerable, may be summed up under two or three heads. First, how can there be any difference between the idea and the object of sense? e.g. between the idea of a house or bed and the actual house or bed? For the idea is nothing when separated from individual objects: a mere word, to which no meaning can be attached. Secondly, who can show any relation between them? The ideas are in their world, and we in ours: they are always either absolutely the same or absolutely different. Thirdly, is there any use in such transcendental speculations?

This refutation of Plato might be regarded as conclusive, if the theory itself is taken in a literal sence. But the ideas of Plato are really poetry or imagery, and cannot be stereotyped in any single form, as the Platonists and Peripatetics of a later generation appear to have supposed. They are sometimes ideals, sometimes realities: they take the form of numbers: they become

logical abstractions: they are one or many, personal or impersonal, accordingly as they are viewed in different aspects. Sometimes, as in the Symposium, they vanish in poetry and fancy; or, as in the Phaedo, Meno, Phaedrus, they are supposed to be recovered from a former state of existence, still enveloped in poetical fancy; or, as in the Timaeus, they are personified; or, as in the Republic, they become a single idea or principle, which is termed the Idea of Good, or they are exhibited under the celebrated image of the sunlight and the den in which the human spirits are confined: while in the Theaetetus and Parmenides they are subjected to a criticism more searching than that of Aristotle, until nothing any longer remains of them. These various modes of representing the 'idea' are not parts of a system, but are the ever-changing aspects of the same philosophical tendency. Under all these forms Plato is seeking to realize the opposition of mind and sense, of νούμενα and phenomena. One thought underlies them all—the truth of universals.

In the later dialogues of Plato, especially in the Sophist and Statesman, a further advance is made. The fanciful and inconsistent language disappears; and he is seriously occupied with the attempt to connect ideas, not with phenomena, but with one another. Among his contemporaries there were some who said that 'no subject was true of any predicate,' a thesis which renders knowledge of any kind impossible: they were met by another school who maintained the equally untenable proposition that 'all might be asserted of all.' To us these conflicting theories are equally absurd, and yet they were both deeply rooted in the previous

philosophy of Hellas. Plato endeavours to find a middle way between them. Not without difficulty he arrives at the conclusion which to us appears self-evident, 'that some things can be asserted of others, but not all of all.' This is probably the furthest point to which he carried his speculation respecting the Ideas. He nowhere clearly explains how they were related to phenomena; but he is at least satisfied that they are connected with each other. The ideas which he had once conceived to exist in isolation he is now able to regard as the links or moments of a system of knowledge.

It is a mistake to regard Plato as the poet-philosopher who produced 'out of the depths of his consciousness' any fancies which occurred to him. In all his writings he is struggling with the problems of his age, striving to give expression to ideas 'which were in the air.' seeking to harmonize conflicting philosophies, or to attain a purer ether which was beyond and above them. Those who think of him as a 'dreamer' only, or as wanting in common sense, or as 'the author of nearly every erroneous notion which has since crept into philosophy,' may be invited to reflect on a few passages of his writings:- 'If you think more about things and less about words you will be richer as you grow older in wisdom' (Statesman 261 E). (Compare such expressions as 'the long and difficult language of facts' (ib. 278 C), or 'learning of every nature which was gifted with any special power, and was able to contribute some special experience to the store of wisdom' (ib. 272 B).) Or let him consider the meaning of the following words in the sphere of politics:-

'Man should be well advised that he is only one of the animals, and the Hellene in particular should be aware that he himself was the author of the distinction between Hellene and Barbarian, and that the Phrygian would equally divide mankind into Phrygians and Barbarians, and that some intelligent animal, like a crane, might go a step further, and divide the animal world into cranes and all other animals '(Plato, Introduction to Engl. Transl. of Statesman, vol. iv. p. 447). Or once more:—'This is and ever will be the best of sayings, That the useful is the noble, and the hurtful is the base' (Rep. v. 457 B). Are these the words of a dreamer? Has modern philosophy ever got much beyond them?

If, stripping off the many-coloured garment in which Plato has enveloped his ideas, we seek, after the manner of Aristotle, to reduce them to their logical skeleton, the meaning and import of them may be conveniently summed up under two heads:—

(r) The first great effort of Plato was to realize abstractions or universals. He wanted to define and explain them, and also to divide and distinguish them from one another. At this point the philosophy of Plato touches that of Aristotle and Socrates. All three alike sought to divide the whole into its parts. But whereas Aristotle and Socrates, like ourselves, regard the idea as existing in outward objects, or in the mind itself, to Plato the ideas acquired such an intensity and reality, that they, for a time at least, became separated both from the mind and from external objects. They might be compared in a figure to lights or stars shining in some far-off heaven. They are not ideas, but im-

personal Gods, ordered by a Supreme Being, or Idea of Good. They could hardly be seen in the atmosphere of light and beauty which surrounded them. To this poetical enthusiasm there was nothing really corresponding but the deep consciousness of the truth of universal ideas and their importance in the world of philosophy.

(2) When ideas were separated from the mind and from objects of sense, another difficulty began to appear. How were they related to each other? Existing in a world of their own, how can they be either distinguished or connected? The mere assertion that the 'One is Many' and the 'Many are One' did not answer the great question of analysis and synthesis, which also pressed upon Plato in his later years: not only, 'how could the whole be resolved into its parts?' but, 'how could the parts be reunited into a whole?' questions which had to be answered both in the concrete and in the abstract (Philebus 15, 16). In the Philebus he approaches this difficulty: in the Sophist he proceeds to the solution of it. From the heaven of ideas in which he had been wandering he now returns to the ground of experience. He shows that there is a natural connexion and correlation of ideas:- 'Many cannot be one, nor being become not being, but unity may also be the same, and being can exist in relation.' The difficulty, which to Plato was real and great, is hardly perceptible to ourselves, and the solution would be regarded by every one as a matter of common sense. Thus the idea of Plato may be said to end in a truism

These are some of the steps by which the human

intellect has attained its reasoning and reflecting powers. Socrates and Plato and Aristotle may be deemed to have invented for mankind new implements in the world of mind as powerful as the wedge, the pulley, the lever, in the material world. The progress of mathematics has always been recognized as the great source of improvements in mechanics, and as the greatest instrument of physical knowledge. Yet the beginnings of mathematics had even a greater power in giving form to the mind itself: they taught men how the many might also be one; and they furnished the type of unchanging knowledge. He who first invented the conception of a cause may be said to have created a power in the world analogous to that of the greatest physical discoveries of any age. To enlarge on this wonderful chapter of the human mind which the early Greek philosophy presents to us, would be beyond the scope of this preface. But we cannot too soon recognize the truth (1) that the wisest of men are limited by the conditions of the age in which they live; and (2) that the highest effort of philosophy in one generation may become the common sense of the next.

THE LIFE OF PLATO

THE personal history of Plato during his long life of more than eighty years is very imperfectly known to us. We possess, indeed, a number of 'Epistles' which bear his name; but these, we have every reason to believe. are the forgery of some Sophist in a later generation. There is also a Life of Plato in the 'Lives of the Philosophers' written by Diogenes Laertius (c. A. D. 210). which, however, like the rest of the work, is a mere farrago of anecdotes and gossip, and, although in some ways curious and interesting, has no real claim to be considered as an authority. Besides the 'Epistles' and the work of Diogenes, an infinite multitude of allusions and references to the circumstances of Plato's life are found scattered up and down among the various classical writers, which do not add much of material importance. The reader who wishes to pursue the subject further, may be referred to 'Zeller's Greek Philosophy' ('Plato and the Older Academy,' Engl. Transl. ch. 1), where he will discover all the evidence brought together in a convenient and compendious form.

Briefly related, the legend of Plato's life—(for it vol. 1. c

scarcely deserves a better title)-may be told as follows: -He was born either at Ægina or Athens, at a date given in the different accounts as 430, 429, or 428 B. C. The names of his parents were Ariston and Perictione (or Potone), and both were of noble birth. His father traced his descent from Codrus, the last king of Attica: his mother, a relation of Critias, reckoned Solon among her ancestors. He was originally called by his grandfather's name, Aristocles. 'Plato' was a name given him by his gymnastic master, on account of his strong physique. He received the usual education of an Athenian youth of the higher classes, and at first turned his attention chiefly to poetry. Becoming acquainted with Socrates about his twentieth year, he burnt his poems, and devoted himself to the study of philosophy. He remained the ardent friend and disciple of Socrates until the latter was put to death (B. c. 399) by the Athenian democracy.

After this event he retired to Megara, and at a later time proceeded on a variety of travels to Egypt, Magna Graecia, and Sicily. The order and extent of his journeys are told in a great number of forms. About 308 B. c. he was at the court of Dionysius the Elder, Tyrant of Syracuse: but soon fell into the disfavour of the tyrant. who sold him as a slave to Pollis, a Spartan. He was brought (it is said) to the slave market of Ægina, where he was redeemed by Anniceris of Cyrene. He then returned to Athens, and commenced teaching publicly in the Academy, a gymnasium with a large garden attached. Here he collected crowds of hearers from all parts of Greece, and among them came Aristotle. who was hereafter to be his rival in the world of thought. He twice left the seclusion of the Academy, first at the solicitation of his Sicilian friend, Dion, to assist in the attempt to make a 'philosopher-king' of the younger Dionysius¹, who had succeeded his father in the tyranny; and, the second time, in order to reconcile the quarrel between Dionysius and Dion. He met with no success in either endeavour, and on the second occasion he only owed his life to the intercession of Archytas, the Pythagorean philosopher of Tarentum. Returning again to Athens he resumed his literary and educational labours, and died some twelve years later, at the age of 81 or 82, as Cicero tells us, 'pen in hand' ('scribens est mortuus,' De Senect. 5. 13).

The sole authentic record of Plato's life is the series of his writings, which hand down to posterity in imperishable characters the memory of many years of patient study and reflection. But since no man, however original his genius, can fail to be influenced by his surroundings, it may be helpful to the reader to collect here a few of the most important events which occurred in Greece during the period of Plato's lifetime. This will assist the student of his writings to realize in some degree the troubled and unhappy state of the world in which Plato's lot was cast, and to understand why he came to despair of effecting any great improvement in the political society, and why he sought and found a refuge from the incurable depravity of mankind in the 'Heaven of Ideas' and the contemplation of 'true Being and Essence.'

¹ Aristotle gives us a very unfavourable character of the despot:— ¹ Dion attacked the younger Dionysius because he despised him, and saw that he was equally despised by his own subjects, and that he was always drunk ¹ (Arist. Pol. v. 10. § 23).

xxxvi

EVENTS OF GREEK HISTORY, B.C. 432-348.

B. C.

- 432-430. Siege of Potidaea (Charm. 153 A; Symp. 219 E, 221 A; Apol. 28 E).
 - 431. Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. The Thebans attack Plataea.
 - 430. The Plague of Athens (Symp. 201 D).
 - 427. Plataea taken and the city destroyed.
 - 425. Capture of the Lacedaemonians in Sphacteria (Menex. 242C). Slaughter of the Oligarchs at Corcyra.
 - 424. The Rout of Delium (Laches 181 B, 188 E; Symp. 221 A; Apol. 28 E).
 - 422. Battle of Amphipolis. [Death of Brasidas and Cleon.]
 (Apol. 28 E).
 - 418. Battle of Mantinea.
 - 416. The Athenians capture Melos; the males of military age put to death; the women and children enslaved.
 - 415. The Mntilation of the Hermae. The Great Expedition to Sicily (Menex. 242 E).
 - 413. Defeat of the Athenians in Sicily and surrender of the army, (about 7000 men). Nicias and Demosthenes executed by the Syracusans.
 - 411. Overthrow of the Athenian Democracy, Government of the 400.
 - 409. Himera and Selinus taken by the Carthaginians, and the inhabitants massacred.
 - 406. Battle of Arginusae. Trial of the Athenian Generals (Apol. 32 B; Menex. 243 C).
 - 405. Destruction of the Athenian navy at Ægospotami. Lysander invests Athens by land and sea.
 - 404. End of the Peloponnesian War. The Athenians conclude a humiliating peace with Sparta, agreeing to pull down their walls, surrender their ships, and acknowledge the supremacy of the Lacedaemonians.

Rule of the Thirty Tyrants (Apol. 32 C).

- 403. Restoration of the Democracy (Apol. 21 A; Menex. 243 E).
- 401. Retreat of the Ten Thousand (Xenophon's Anabasis).
- 399. Death of Socrates (Phaedo 115 B foll.).

B. C.

394-387. The Corinthian War (Theaet: 142; Menex. 245 E).

387. Peace of Antalcidas. The Hellenic cities of Asia given over to the King.

385. The Lacedaemonians compel the Mantineans to break up their city into four villages (Symp. 193 A).

384. Birth of Aristotle.

383-379. War between Sparta and Olynthus.

371. Battle of Leuctra.

362. Second Battle of Mantinea, and Death of Epaminondas.

358-356. War between Athens and her revolted allies.

356. Birth of Alexander the Great.

355. The Phocians seize the temple of Delphi.

353. Assassination of Dion at Syracuse.

348. Olynthus captured by Philip of Macedon. Death of Plato.

ERRATA.

Vot. I.

- P. 16. Six lines from bottom, after 'swiftness,' insert 'while he equipped the weaker with swiftness.'
- P. 72. For 'Steph. 219 A.' read 'Steph. 219 E.'
- P. 218. Three lines from bottom, for 'their own selves' read' their own evil selves.'

Vol. II.

- P. 2. Middle of page, for 'evil and unrighteousness' read' evil or unrighteousness.'
- P. 49 For 'Steph. 471 B.' read 'Steph. 471 C.'

SELECTIONS

FROM THE

DIALOGUES OF PLATO

ERRATA.

Vol. I.

- P. 16. Six lines from bottom, after 'swiftness,' insert 'while he equipped the weaker with swiftness.'
- P. 72. For 'Steph. 219 A.' read 'Steph. 219 E.'
- P. 218. Three lines from bottom, for 'their own selves' read' their own evil selves.'

Vol. II.

- P. 2. Middle of page, for 'evil and unrighteousness' read 'evil or unrighteousness'
- P. 49 For 'Steph. 471 B.' read 'Steph. 471 C.'

SELECTIONS

FROM THE

DIALOGUES OF PLATO

SELECTIONS FROM PLATO

CHARMIDES

Socrates prescribes for Charmides' headache.

THE Charmides, which is probably among the earliest of the Platonic dialogues, is a conversation on the virtue of Temperance between Socrates and the beautiful youth Charmides. Critias, the uncle and guardian of Charmides, and afterwards one of the Thirty Tyrants, also takes part in the discussion.

... Socrates makes the acquaintance of Charmides under the pretext that he knows a cure for the headache to which the youth has been subject, and proceeds to explain the nature of the remedy, which includes a charm for the soul as well as medical treatment for the body.

In the extract which follows Plato shows a true conception of the art of Medicine; nor is his satire without point in our own days. We, too, like the physicians of Hellas, are apt to be satisfied with applying a local remedy to the disease, and to forget that the care of the whole body must precede and guide the treatment of the part. The reader may compare a passage from the Timacus (88), to be given later on, in which Plato dwells with emphasis upon the intimate connexion of soul and body, and traces some diseases to a mental origin.

Such, Charmides, I said, is the nature of the charm, Steph. which I learned when serving with the army from one of the physicians of the Thracian king Zamolxis, who are said to be so skilful that they can even give immortality. This Thracian told me that in these notions of theirs, which I was just now mentioning, the Greek physicians are quite right as far as they go;

VOL. I.

but Zamolxis, he added, our king, who is also a god, says further, 'that as you ought not to attempt to cure the eyes without the head, or the head without the body, so neither ought you to attempt to cure the body without the soul; and this,' he said, 'is the reason why the cure of many diseases is unknown to the physicians of Hellas, because they are ignorant of the whole, which ought to be studied also; for the part can never be well unless the whole is well.' For all good and evil, whether in the body or in human nature, originates, as he declared, in the soul, and overflows from thence, as if from the 157 head into the eyes. And therefore if the head and body are to be well, you must begin by curing the soul; that is the first thing.

And the cure, my dear youth, has to be effected by the use of certain charms, and these charms are fair words; and by them temperance is implanted in the soul, and where temperance is, there health is speedily imparted, not only to the head, but to the whole body. And he who taught me the cure and the charm at the same time added a special direction: 'Let no one,' he said, 'persuade you to cure the head, until he has first given you his soul to be cured by the charm. For this,' he said, 'is the great error of our day in the treatment of the human body, that physicians separate the soul from the body.' And he added with emphasis, at the same time making me swear to his words, 'Let no one, however rich, or noble, or fair, persuade you to give him the cure, without the charm.' Now I have sworn, and I must keep my oath, and therefore if you will allow me to apply the Thracian charm first to your soul, as the stranger directed, I will afterwards proceed to apply the cure to your head. But if not, I do not know what I am to do with you, my dear Charmides.

LYSIS

We only trust those who appear to know more than ourselves.

The subject of the Lysis is Friendship. Socrates, in order to reprove and instruct Hippothales, the foolish admirer of the beautiful youth after whom the Dialogue is named, enters into conversation with Lysis and his friend Menexenus. The boys and youths are celebrating the festival of the Hermaea, and we have a charming picture of them at their play during an interval in the ceremonies.

. . . Lysis, who is represented as of a gentle and modest nature, joins with some diffidence the circle around Socrates, and is gradually drawn into an argument by him. Socrates is desirous to teach the boy the lesson which it is his mission to impart to all mankind, that self-humiliation is the first step in the road to knowledge. Lysis is dearly loved by his father and mother; but they chastise and rebuke him if he meddles in matters of which he is ignorant. And when he grows up he will not be allowed to manage other people's affairs, unless he can convince them that he has a wisdom which they do not possess.

Upon entering we found that the boys had just been steph. sacrificing; and this part of the festival was nearly at an end. They were all in their white array, and games at dice were going on among them. Most of them were in the outer court amusing themselves; but some were in a corner of the Apodyterium playing at odd and even with a number of dice, which they took out of little wicker baskets. There was also a circle of lookers-on; among them was Lysis. He was standing with the other boys and youths, having 207 a crown upon his head, like a fair vision, and not less worthy of praise for his goodness than for his beauty. We left them, and went over to the opposite side of the room, where, finding a quiet place, we sat down; and then we began to talk. This attracted

4 LYSIS

Lysis, who was constantly turning round to look at us—he was evidently wanting to come to us. For a time he hesitated and had not the courage to come alone; but first of all, his friend Menexenus, leaving his play, entered the Palaestra from the court, and when he saw Ctesippus and myself, was going to take a seat by us; and then Lysis, seeing him, followed, and sat down by his side; and the other boys joined. I should observe that Hippothales, when he saw the crowd, got behind them, where he thought that he would be out of sight of Lysis, lest he should anger him; and there he stood and listened

I turned to Menexenus, and said: Son of Demophon, which of you two youths is the elder?

That is a matter of dispute between us, he said.

And which is the nobler? Is that also a matter of dispute?

Yes, certainly.

And another disputed point is, which is the fairer? The two boys laughed.

I shall not ask which is the richer of the two, I said; for you are friends, are you not?

Certainly, they replied.

And friends have all things in common, so that one of you can be no richer than the other, if you say truly that you are friends.

They assented. I was about to ask which was the juster of the two, and which was the wiser of the two; but at this moment Menexenus was called away by some one who came and said that the gymnastic-master wanted him. I supposed that he had to offer sacrifice. So he went away, and I asked Lysis some more questions. I dare say, Lysis, I said, that your father and mother love you very much.

Certainly, he said.

And they would wish you to be perfectly happy.

Yes.

But do you think that any one is happy who is in the condition of a slave, and who cannot do what he likes?

I should think not indeed, he said.

And if your father and mother love you, and desire that you should be happy, no one can doubt that they are very ready to promote your happiness.

Certainly, he replied.

And do they then permit you to do what you like, and never rebuke you or hinder you from doing what you desire?

Yes, indeed, Socrates; there are a great many things which they hinder me from doing.

What do you mean? I said. Do they want you to 208 be happy, and yet hinder you from doing what you like? for example, if you want to mount one of your father's chariots, and take the reins at a race, they will not allow you to do so—they will prevent you?

Certainly, he said, they will not allow me to do so.

Whom then will they allow?

There is a charioteer, whom my father pays for driving.

And do they trust a hireling more than you? and may he do what he likes with the horses? and do they pay him for this?

They do.

But I dare say that you may take the whip and guide the mule-cart if you like;—they will permit that?

Permit me! indeed they will not.

Then, I said, may no one use the whip to the mules?

Yes, he said, the muleteer.

And is he a slave or a free man?

6 LYSIS

A slave, he said.

And do they esteem a slave of more value than you who are their son? And do they entrust their property to him rather than to you? and allow him to do what he likes, when they prohibit you? Answer me now: Are you your own master, or do they not even allow that?

Nay, he said; of course they do not allow it.

Then you have a master?

Yes, my tutor; there he is.

And is he a slave?

To be sure; he is our slave, he replied.

Surely, I said, this is a strange thing, that a free man should be governed by a slave. And what does he do with you?

He takes me to my teachers.

You do not mean to say that your teachers also rule over you?

Of course they do.

Then I must say that your father is pleased to inflict many lords and masters on you. But at any rate when you go home to your mother, she will let you have your own way, and will not interfere with your happiness; her wool, or the piece of cloth which she is weaving, are at your disposal: I am sure that there is nothing to hinder you from touching her wooden spathe, or her comb, or any other of her spinning implements.

Nay, Socrates, he replied, laughing; not only does she hinder me, but I should be beaten, if I were to touch one of them.

Well, I said, this is amazing. And did you ever behave ill to your father or your mother?

No, indeed, he replied.

But why then are they so terribly anxious to prevent you from being happy, and doing as you like?—keeping you all day long in subjection to another, and, in a word, doing nothing which you desire; so that you have no good, as would appear, out of their great possessions, which are under the control of anybody rather than of you, and have no use of your own fair 209 person, which is tended and taken care of by another; while you, Lysis, are master of nobody, and can do nothing?

Why, he said, Socrates, the reason is that I am not of age.

I doubt whether that is the real reason, I said; for I should imagine that your father Democrates, and your mother, do permit you to do many things already, and do not wait until you are of age: for example, if they want anything read or written, you, I presume, would be the first person in the house who is summoned by them.

Very true.

And you would be allowed to write or read the letters in any order which you please, or to take up the lyre and tune the notes, and play with the fingers, or strike with the plectrum, exactly as you please, and neither father nor mother would interfere with you.

That is true, he said.

Then what can be the reason, Lysis, I said, why they allow you to do the one and not the other?

I suppose, he said, because I understand the one, and not the other.

Yes, my dear youth, I said, the reason is not any deficiency of years, but a deficiency of knowledge; and whenever your father thinks that you are wiser than he is, he will instantly commit himself and his possessions to you.

I think so.

Ay, I said; and about your neighbour, too, does not the same rule hold as about your father? If he is 8 LYSIS

satisfied that you know more of housekeeping than he does, will he continue to administer his affairs himself, or will he commit them to you?

I think that he will commit them to me.

Will not the Athenian people, too, entrust their affairs to you when they see that you have wisdom enough to manage them?

Yes.

And oh! let me put another case, I said: There is the great king, and he has an eldest son, who is the Prince of Asia;—suppose that you and I go to him and establish to his satisfaction that we are better cooks than his son, will he not entrust to us the prerogative of making soup, and putting in anything that we like while the pot is boiling, rather than to the Prince of Asia, who is his son?

To us, clearly.

And we shall be allowed to throw in salt by handfuls, whereas the son will not be allowed to put in as much as he can take up between his fingers?

Of course.

Or suppose again that the son has bad eyes, will he allow him, or will he not allow him, to touch his 210 own eyes if he thinks that he has no knowledge of medicine?

He will not allow him.

Whereas, if he supposes us to have a knowledge of medicine, he will allow us to do what we like with him—even to open the eyes wide and sprinkle ashes upon them, because he supposes that we know what is best?

That is true.

And everything in which we appear to him to be wiser than himself or his son he will commit to us?

That is very true, Socrates, he replied.

Then now, my dear Lysis, I said, you perceive that in things which we know every one will trust us,— Hellenes and barbarians, men and women,—and we may do as we please about them, and no one will like to interfere with us; we shall be free, and masters of others; and these things will be really ours, for we shall be benefited by them. But in things of which we have no understanding, no one will trust us to do as seems good to us—they will hinder us as far as they can; and not only strangers, but father and mother, and the friend, if there be one, who is dearer still, will also hinder us; and we shall be subject to others; and these things will not be ours, for we shall not be benefited by them. Do you agree?

He assented.

LACHES

The art of fighting in armour is useless to the soldier.

In the Laches the nature of Courage is discussed between Socrates and the Athenian generals, Laches and Nicias. Two old men are introduced,—Lysimachus, son of Aristeides the Just, and Melesias, son of Thucydides the elder. They have now themselves sons growing up, and they are anxious about their education. Their own fathers had been too busy with the affairs of the state to attend to the education of their children, and they are determined not to repeat this error. They have been witnessing an exhibition by a fencing master, and they inquire of Laches and Nicias whether, in their opinion, the art is one which should be learnt by young men.

Nicias thinks that it is a useful training for the military life, and also valuable in actual warfare. But Laches is of another mind, and he sets forth his objections in the following terms:—

I should not like to maintain, Nicias, that any kind of Steph. knowledge is not to be learned; for all knowledge E appears to be a good: and if, as Nicias and as the

IO LACHES

teachers of the art affirm, this use of arms is really a species of knowledge, then it ought to be learned; but if not, and if those who profess to teach it are deceivers only; or if it be knowledge, but not of a valuable sort. then what is the use of learning it? I say this, because 183 I think that if it had been really valuable, the Lacedaemonians, whose whole life is passed in finding out and practising the arts which give them an advantage over other nations in war, would have discovered this one. And even if they had not, still these professors of the art would certainly not have failed to discover that of all the Hellenes the Lacedaemonians have the greatest interest in such matters, and that a master of the art who was honoured among them would be sure to make his fortune among other nations, just as a tragic poet would who is honoured among ourselves; which is the reason why he who fancies that he can write a tragedy does not go about itinerating in the neighbouring states, but rushes hither straight, and exhibits at Athens; and this is natural. Whereas I perceive that these fighters in armour regard Lacedaemon as a sacred inviolable territory, which they do not touch with the point of their foot; but they make a circuit of the neighbouring states, and would rather exhibit to any others than to the Spartans; and particularly to those who would themselves acknowledge that they are by no means first-rate in the arts of war

Further, Lysimachus, I have encountered a good many of these gentlemen in actual service, and have taken their measure, which I can give you at once; for none of these masters of fence have ever been distinguished in war,—there has been a sort of fatality about them; while in all other arts the men of note have been always those who have practised the art, they appear to be a most unfortunate exception. For

example, this very Stesilaus, whom you and I have just witnessed exhibiting in all that crowd and making such great professions of his powers, I have seen at another time making, in sober truth, an involuntary exhibition of himself, which was a far better spectacle. He was a marine on board a ship which struck a transport vessel, and was armed with a weapon, half spear, half scythe; the singularity of this weapon was worthy of the singularity of the man. To make a long story short. I will only tell you what happened to this notable invention of the scythe-spear. He was fighting, and the scythe was caught in the rigging of the other ship, and stuck fast; and he tugged, but was unable to get his weapon free. The two ships were passing one another. He first ran along his own ship holding on to the spear; but as the other ship passed by and drew him after as he was holding on, he let the spear slip through his hand until he retained only the end of the handle. The people in the transport clapped 184 their hands, and laughed at his ridiculous figure; and when some one threw a stone, which fell on the deck at his feet, and he quitted his hold of the scythe-spear, the crew of his own trireme also burst out laughing; they could not refrain when they beheld the weapon waving in the air, suspended from the transport.

Now I do not deny that there may be something in such an art, as Nicias asserts, but I tell you my experience; and, as I said at first, whether this be an art of which the advantage is so slight, or not an art at all, but only an imposition, in either case such an acquirement is not worth having. For my opinion is, that if the professor of this art be a coward, he will be likely to become rash, and his character will be only more notorious; or if he be brave, and fail ever so little, other men will be on the watch, and he will be greatly

12 LACHES

traduced; for there is a jealousy of such pretenders; and unless a man be pre-eminent in valour, he cannot help being ridiculous, if he says that he has this sort of skill. Such is my judgment, Lysimachus, of the desirableness of this art; but, as I said at first, ask Socrates, and do not let him go until he has given you his opinion of the matter.

2. The harmony of words and deeds.

Nicias now suggests that Socrates shall be taken into the discussion. Laches gladly assents:—

I HAVE but one feeling, Nicias, or (shall I say?) two т 88 ^C feelings, about discussions. Some would think that I am a lover, and to others I may seem to be a hater of discourse; for when I hear a man discoursing of virtue, or of any sort of wisdom, who is a true man and worthy of his theme. I am delighted beyond measure: and I compare the man and his words, and note the harmony and correspondence of them. And such an one I deem to be the true musician, attuned to a fairer harmony than that of the lyre, or any pleasant instrument of music; for truly he has in his own life a harmony of words and deeds arranged, not in the Ionian, or in the Phrygian mode, nor yet in the Lydian; but in the true Hellenic mode, which is the Dorian, and no other. Such an one makes me merry with the sound of his voice; and when I hear him I am thought to be a lover of discourse; so eager am I in drinking in his words. But a man whose actions do not agree with his words is an annoyance to me; and the better he speaks the more I hate him, and then I seem to be a hater of discourse.

As to Socrates, I have no knowledge of his words, but of old, as would seem, I have had experience of

his deeds; and his deeds show that free and noble 189 sentiments are natural to him. And if his words accord. then I am of one mind with him, and shall be delighted to be interrogated by a man such as he is, and shall not be annoyed at having to learn of him: for I too agree with Solon, 'that I would fain grow old, learning many things.' But I must be allowed to add 'of the good only.' Socrates must be willing to allow that he is a good teacher, or I shall be a dull and uncongenial pupil: but that the teacher is younger, or not as yet in repute—anything of that sort is of no account with me. And therefore, Socrates, I give you notice that you may teach and confute me as much as ever you like, and also learn of me anything which I know. So high is the opinion which I have entertained of you ever since the day on which you were my companion in danger, and gave a proof of your valour such as only the man of merit can give. Therefore, say whatever you like, and do not mind about the difference of our ages.

PROTAGORAS

I. The Sophists at the house of Callias.

The Protagoras commences with a lively scene, in which Hippocrates, a young Athenian, rouses Socrates before dawn with the announcement that the great Sophist has come to Athens. He is all excitement and wants to go forthwith to Protagoras and become his disciple. Socrates induces him to wait until daylight, and then takes the youth to the house of Callias, where Protagoras is staying with a number of other Sophists.

Soc. And now let us go, as we were intending, and hear Steph. Protagoras; and when we have heard what he has to ³¹⁴_B say, we may take counsel of others; for not only is

Protagoras at the house of Callias, but there is Hippias of Elis, and, if I am not mistaken, Prodicus of Ceos, and several other wise men.

To this we agreed, and proceeded on our way until we reached the vestibule of the house; and there we stopped in order to conclude a discussion which had arisen between us as we were going along; and we stood talking in the vestibule until we had finished and come to an understanding. And I think that the doorkeeper, who was a eunuch, and who was probably annoyed at the great inroad of the Sophists, must have heard us talking. At any rate, when we knocked at the door, and he opened and saw us, he grumbled: They are Sophists—he is not at home; and instantly gave the door a hearty bang with both his hands. Again we knocked, and he answered without opening: Did you not hear me say that he is not at home, fellows? But, my friend, I said, you need not be alarmed; for we are not Sophists, and we are not come to see Callias, but we want to see Protagoras; and I must request you to announce us. At last, after a good deal of difficulty, the man was persuaded to open the door.

When we entered, we found Protagoras taking a walk in the cloister; and next to him, on one side, were walking Callias, the son of Hipponicus, and Paralus, the 315 son of Pericles, who, by the mother's side, is his half-brother, and Charmides, the son of Glaucon. On the other side of him were Xanthippus, the other son of Pericles; Philippides, the son of Philomelus; also Antimoerus of Mende, who of all the disciples of Protagoras is the most famous, and intends to make sophistry his profession. A train of listeners followed him; the greater part of them appeared to be foreigners, whom Protagoras had brought with him out of the various cities visited by him in his journeys, he, like

Orpheus, attracting them by his voice, and they following ¹. I should mention also that there were some Athenians in the company. Nothing delighted me more than the precision of their movements: they never got into his way at all; but when he and those who were with him turned back, then the band of listeners parted regularly on either side; he was always in front, and they wheeled round and took their places behind him in perfect order.

After him, as Homer says 2, 'I lifted up my eyes and saw' Hippias the Elean sitting in the opposite cloister on a chair of state, and around him were seated on benches Eryximachus, the son of Acumenus, and Phaedrus the Myrrhinusian, and Andron the son of Androtion, and there were strangers whom he had brought with him from his native city of Elis, and some others: they were putting to Hippias certain physical and astronomical questions, and he, ex cathedrâ, was determining their several questions to them, and discoursing of them.

Also, 'my eyes beheld Tantalus'; 'for Prodicus the Cean was at Athens: he had been lodged in a room which, in the days of Hipponicus, was a storehouse; but, as the house was full, Callias had cleared this out and made the room into a guest-chamber. Now Prodicus was still in bed, wrapped up in sheepskins and bedclothes, of which there seemed to be a great heap; and there was sitting by him on the couches near, Pausanias of the deme of Cerameis, and with Pausanias was a youth quite young, who is certainly remarkable for his good looks, and, if I am not mistaken, is also of a fair and gentle nature. I thought that I heard him called Agathon, and my suspicion is that he is the

¹ Cp. Rep. x. 600 D.

² Od. xi. 601 foll.

³ Od. xi. 582.

beloved of Pausanias. There was this youth, and also there were the two Adeimantuses, one the son of Cepis, and the other of Leucolophides, and some others. I was very anxious to hear what Prodicus was saying, for he seems to me to be an all-wise and inspired man; 316 but I was not able to get into the inner circle, and his fine deep voice made an echo in the room which rendered his words inaudible.

2. Protagoras tells the story of Prometheus and Epimetheus.

Socrates now introduces Hippocrates to the Sophist and explains their errand; but he would like to know what happens to young men who associate with Protagoras. 'They will become better,' is the reply. 'Can virtue, however, really be taught?' asks Socrates. Protagoras gives his answer in the form of a myth or apologue, which will, he thinks, be the most entertaining way to the audience:—

h. Once upon a time there were gods only, and no mortal creatures. But when the time came that these also should be created, the gods fashioned them out of earth and fire and various mixtures of both elements in the interior of the earth; and when they were about to bring them into the light of day, they ordered Prometheus and Epimetheus to equip them, and to distribute to them severally their proper qualities. Epimetheus said to Prometheus: 'Let me distribute, and do you inspect.' This was agreed, and Epimetheus made the distribution.

There were some to whom he gave strength without swiftness; some he armed, and others he left unarmed; and devised for the latter some other means of preservation, making some large, and having their size as a protection, and others small, whose nature was to 321 fly in the air or burrow in the ground; this was to be their way of escape. Thus did he compensate

Steph. 320 D them with the view of preventing any race from becoming extinct. And when he had provided against their destruction by one another, he contrived also a means of protecting them against the seasons of heaven; clothing them with close hair and thick skins sufficient to defend them against the winter cold and able to resist the summer heat, so that they might have a natural bed of their own when they wanted to rest: also be furnished them with hoofs and hair and hard and callous skins under their feet. Then he gave them varieties of food,-herb of the soil to some, to others fruits of trees, and to others roots, and to some again he gave other animals as food. And some he made to have few young ones, while those who were their prey were very prolific; and in this manner the race was preserved. Thus did Epimetheus, who, not being very wise, forgot that he had distributed among the brute animals all the qualities which he had to give, -- and when he came to man, who was still unprovided, he was terribly perplexed.

Now while he was in this perplexity, Prometheus came to inspect the distribution, and he found that the other animals were suitably furnished, but that man alone was naked and shoeless, and had neither bed nor arms of defence. The appointed hour was approaching when man in his turn was to go forth into the light of day; and Prometheus, not knowing how he could devise his salvation, stole the mechanical arts of Hephaestus and Athene, and fire with them (they could neither have been acquired nor used without fire), and gave them to man. Thus man had the wisdom necessary to the support of life, but political wisdom he had not; for that was in the keeping of Zeus, and the power of Prometheus did not extend to entering into the citadel of heaven, where Zeus

dwelt, who moreover had terrible sentinels; but he did enter by stealth into the common workshop of Athene and Hephaestus, in which they used to practise their favourite arts, and carried off Hephaestus' art of working by fire, and also the art of Athene, and gave them to man. And in this way man was supplied with the means of life. But Prometheus is said to have been afterwards prosecuted for theft, owing to the blunder of Epimetheus.

Now man, having a share of the divine attributes, was at first the only one of the animals who had any gods, because he alone was of their kindred; and he would raise altars and images of them. He was not long in inventing articulate speech and names; and he also constructed houses and clothes and shoes and beds, and drew sustenance from the earth. Thus provided, mankind at first lived dispersed, and there were no cities. But the consequence was that they were destroyed by the wild beasts, for they were utterly weak in comparison of them, and their art was only sufficient to provide them with the means of life, and did not enable them to carry on war against the animals: food they had, but not as yet the art of government, of which the art of war is a part. After a while the desire of self-preservation gathered them into cities; but when they were gathered together, having no art of government, they evil intreated one another, and were again in process of dispersion and destruction.

Zeus feared that the entire race would be exterminated, and so he sent Hermes to them, bearing reverence and justice to be the ordering principles of cities and the bonds of friendship and conciliation. Hermes asked Zeus how he should impart justice and reverence among men:—Should he distribute them as the arts are distributed; that is to say, to

a favoured few only, one skilled individual having enough of medicine or of any other art for many unskilled ones? 'Shall this be the manner in which I am to distribute justice and reverence among men, or shall I give them to all?' 'To all,' said Zeus; 'I should like them all to have a share; for cities cannot exist, if a few only share in the virtues, as in the arts. And further, make a law by my order, that he who has no part in reverence and justice shall be put to death, for he is a plague of the state.'

3. The education of a Greek child.

Continuing his argument Protagoras shows that mankind certainly believe that virtue can be taught, or else they would not train and educate their children or consent to punish those who offend against the laws. He then gives a brief sketch of Hellenic education, such as was in vogue in his day. There were two main divisions, μουσική and γυμναστική, the former including, besides 'music' in our sense of the term, every kind of mental training. The chief subjects taught in the schools were, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic (though this is omitted here by Plato), the learning of poetry, and, as we gather from Aristotle (Pol. viii. 3, § 1), Drawing. Nothing is said in the present passage about the age at which children were sent to school; but Plato himself in the Laws (vii. 810) tells us that they are to commence their education at ten, and to spend three years in learning to read and write, and three more in studying music.

We at first observe with some surprise the large part which is occupied by poetry in elementary education (cp. Plato, Laws vii. 811 A): yet this finds a modern parallel in countries like Italy and Persia, where the great national poets are familiarly known to every class of the people.

Another feature in which there is a greater divergence from modern ideas is the special training in gymnastics after the completion of other studies. It must be remembered that gymnastics were valued in Hellas, not merely for their own sake, but as a training for war (cp. Plato, Laws vii. 813 D). The youth passed from the gymnasia into the ranks of the army, and the ties of friendship which grew up between them and were carried into the field were thought to supply an element of cohesion and also an incentive to valour.

Steph. 325 C Education and admonition commence in the first years of childhood, and last to the very end of life. Mother and nurse and father and tutor are vying with one another about the improvement of the child as soon as ever he is able to understand what is being said to him: he cannot say or do anything without their setting forth to him that this is just and that is unjust; this is honourable, that is dishonourable; this is holy, that is unholy; do this and abstain from that. And if he obeys, well and good; if not, he is straightened by threats and blows, like a piece of bent or warped wood. At a later stage they send him to teachers, and enjoin them to see to his manners even more than to his reading and music; and the teachers do as they are desired.

And when the boy has learned his letters and is beginning to understand what is written, as before 326 he understood only what was spoken, they put into his hands the works of great poets, which he reads sitting on a bench at school; in these are contained many admonitions, and many tales, and praises, and encomia of ancient famous men, which he is required to learn by heart, in order that he may imitate or emulate them and desire to become like them. Then, again, the teachers of the lyre take similar care that their young disciple is temperate and gets into no mischief; and when they have taught him the use of the lyre, they introduce him to the poems of other excellent poets, who are the lyric poets; and these they set to music, and make their harmonies and rhythms quite familiar to the children's souls, in order that they may learn to be more gentle, and harmonious, and rhythmical, and so more fitted for speech and action; for the life of man in every part has need of harmony and rhythm. Then they send them to the master of gymnastic, in order that their bodies may better minister to the virtuous mind, and that they may not be compelled through bodily weakness to play the coward in war or on any other occasion. This is what is done by those who have the means, and those who have the means are the rich; their children begin to go to school soonest and leave off latest.

When they have done with masters, the state again compels them to learn the laws, and live after the pattern which they furnish, and not after their own fancies; and just as in learning to write, the writingmaster first draws lines with a style for the use of the young beginner, and gives him the tablet and makes him follow the lines, so the city draws the laws, which were the invention of good lawgivers living in the olden time; these are given to the young man, in order to guide him in his conduct whether he is commanding or obeying; and he who transgresses them is to be corrected, or, in other words, called to account. which is a term used not only in your country, but also in many others, seeing that justice calls men to account. Now when there is all this care about virtue private and public, why, Socrates, do you still wonder and doubt whether virtue can be taught? Cease to wonder, for the opposite would be far more surprising.

EUTHYDEMUS

The doctrinaire Politician and the true Philosopher.

The Euthydemus, which is one of the most humorous, or, rather, satirical of the Platonic Dialogues, is a conversation between Socrates and two Sophists, the brothers Dionysodorus and Euthydemus, who have arrived at Athens from Thurii. They represent the lower type

of their class, akin to Thrasymachus, whose acquaintance we shall make in the Republic, and far inferior to Protagoras or Prodicus. Like Hippias (Hipp. Min. 363), they profess to be all-accomplished; and when they came to Athens on a previous occasion, they had made a great parade of their skill in fencing. Now they have carried the art of fighting into another field, and teach men how to contend in the law courts and in the schools of the philosophers. They are vain, boastful, and rude in the last degree, and Socrates fools them to the top of their bent, while at the same time he shows that their famous wisdom is a mere playing with words, which has no ethical or intellectual significance. Towards the close of the discussion he professes to be enraptured with the omniscient brothers, and begs to be admitted among their disciples.

So far he has been narrating the conversation to his aged friend Crito, whom he now requests to accompany him to the Sophists. Crito rather demurs to the proposal, and tells Socrates of an unfavourable criticism which had been passed upon yesterday's scene and upon philosophy in general by a man of repute. Socrates enquires who he is, and is informed that he is a lawyer, who does not practise himself, but writes speeches for others. Socrates defends philosophy and attacks in turn the class to which his critic belongs. They are that species, half politician, half philosopher, whom we commonly speak of as doctrinaires or dilettantes.

These have never in any country enjoyed much popularity. They are regarded by politicians and the world in general as unpractical, because of their idealism, while the attempt which they make to reconcile politics and philosophy is no less distasteful to the metaphysician. The works of Plato show many traces of this opposition, and it was probably the origin of the dislike which he manifests to the orators and rhetoricians whom he satirizes so keenly in the Phaedrus and Gorgias. We may also compare the fact that in the Apology one of Socrates' accusers, Lycon, appears on behalf of the rhetoricians (Apol. 23 E).

Steph. 304 B

Soc. Such was the discussion, Crito; and after a few more words had passed between us we went away. I hope that you will come to them with me, since they say that they are able to teach any one who will give them money; no age or want of capacity is an impediment. And I must repeat one thing which they said, for your especial benefit,—that the learning of their art did not at all interfere with the business of money-making.

Cri. Truly, Socrates, though I am curious and ready to learn, yet I fear that I am not like-minded with Euthydemus, but one of the other sort, who, as you were saying, would rather be refuted by such arguments than use them in refutation of others. And though I may appear ridiculous in venturing to advise you, I think that you may as well hear what was said to me by a man of very considerable pretensions—he was a professor of legal oratory—who came away from you while I was walking up and down.

'Crito,' said he to me, 'are you giving no attention to these wise men?' 'No, indeed,' I said to him; 'I could not get within hearing of them-there was such a crowd.' 'You would have heard something worth hearing if you had.' 'What was that?' I said. 'You would have heard the greatest masters of the art of rhetoric discoursing.' 'And what did you think of them?' I said. 'What did I think of them?' he said:—'theirs was the sort of discourse which anybody might hear from men who were playing the fool, and making much ado about nothing.' That was the expression which he used. 'Surely,' I said, 'philosophy is a charming thing.' 'Charming!' he 305 said; 'what simplicity! philosophy is nought; and I think that if you had been present you would have been ashamed of your friend-his conduct was so very strange in placing himself at the mercy of men who care not what they say, and fasten upon every word. And these, as I was telling you, are supposed to be the most eminent professors of their time. But the truth is, Crito, that the study itself and the men themselves are utterly mean and ridiculous.'

Now censure of the pursuit, Socrates, whether coming from him or from others, appears to me to be undeserved; but as to the impropriety of holding

a public discussion with such men, there, I confess that, in my opinion, he was in the right.

Soc. O Crito, they are marvellous men; but what was I going to say? First of all let me know;—What manner of man was he who came up to you and censured philosophy; was he an orator who himself practises in the courts, or an instructor of orators, who makes the speeches with which they do battle?

Cri. He was certainly not an orator, and I doubt whether he had ever been into court; but they say that he knows the business, and is a clever man, and composes wonderful speeches.

Soc. Now I understand, Crito; he is one of an amphibious class, whom I was on the point of mentioning —one of those whom Prodicus describes as on the border-ground between philosophers and statesmenthey think that they are the wisest of all men, and that they are generally esteemed the wisest; nothing but the rivalry of the philosophers stands in their way; and they are of the opinion that if they can prove the philosophers to be good for nothing, no one will dispute their title to the palm of wisdom, for that they are themselves really the wisest, although they are apt to be mauled by Euthydemus and his friends, when they get hold of them in conversation. This opinion which they entertain of their own wisdom is very natural: for they have a certain amount of philosophy, and a certain amount of political wisdom; there is reason in what they say, for they argue that they have just enough of both, and so they keep out of the way of all risks and conflicts and reap the fruits of their wisdom.

Cri. What do you say of them, Socrates? There is certainly something specious in that notion of theirs.

Soc. Yes. Crito there is more speciousness than

truth; they cannot be made to understand the nature 306 of intermediates. For all persons or things, which are intermediate between two other things, and participate in both of them—if one of these two things is good and the other evil, are better than the one and worse than the other; but if they are in a mean between two good things which do not tend to the same end, they fall short of either of their component elements in the attainment of their ends. Only in the case when the two component elements which do not tend to the same end are evil is the participant better than either.

Now, if philosophy and political action are both good, but tend to different ends, and they participate in both, and are in a mean between them, then they are talking nonsense, for they are worse than either; or, if the one be good and the other evil, they are better than the one and worse than the other; only on the supposition that they are both evil could there be any truth in what they say. I do not think that they will admit that their two pursuits are either wholly or partly evil; but the truth is, that these philosopher-politicians who aim at both fall short of both in the attainment of their respective ends, and are really third, although they would like to stand first. There is no need, however, to be angry at this ambition of theirs-which may be forgiven; for every man ought to be loved who says and manfully pursues and works out anything which is at all like wisdom: at the same time we shall do well to see them as they really are.

Cri. I have often told you, Socrates, that I am in a constant difficulty about my two sons. What am I to do with them? There is no hurry about the younger one, who is only a child; but the other, Critobulus, is getting on, and needs some one who will improve him. I cannot help thinking, when I hear you talk, that there

is a sort of madness in many of our anxieties about our children:—in the first place, about marrying a wife of good family to be the mother of them, and then about heaping up money for them—and yet taking no care about their education. But then again, when I contemplate any of those who pretend to educate others, 307 I am amazed. To me, if I am to confess the truth, they all seem to be such outrageous beings: so that I do not know how I can advise the youth to study philosophy.

Soc. Dear Crito, do you not know that in every profession the inferior sort are numerous and good for nothing, and the good are few and beyond all price: for example, are not gymnastic and rhetoric and money-making and the art of the general, noble arts?

Cri. Certainly they are, in my judgment.

Soc. Well, and do you not see that in each of these arts the many are ridiculous performers?

Cri. Yes, indeed, that is very true.

Soc. And will you on this account shun all these pursuits yourself and refuse to allow them to your son?

Cri. That would not be reasonable, Socrates.

Soc. Do you then be reasonable, Crito, and do not mind whether the teachers of philosophy are good or bad, but think only of philosophy herself. Try and examine her well and truly, and if she be evil seek to turn away all men from her, and not your sons only; but if she be what I believe that she is, then follow her and serve her, you and your house, as the saying is, and be of good cheer.

CRATYLUS

The significations of the various letters.

The Cratylus belongs to the longer and more important class of Plato's writings. The subject is the nature and origin of language, a question which has lost none of its interest for ourselves.

Cratylus, a philosopher of the Heraclitean school, and Hermogenes, the poor and unlucky brother of the wealthy Callias, have been discussing the meaning of names, and they call upon Socrates to help them in the argument. Cratylus affirms that names have a natural truth or correctness: Hermogenes thinks that they are a matter of convention.

Socrates regrets that his poverty has not allowed him to attend the 'fifty drachma course' of the all-wise Prodicus; still he is willing to give what assistance he can. The theory which he advances, when stripped of the ironical and fantastic garb in which it is presented by him, may be most easily explained as a middle view between the natural and the conventional. All names are not true; neither are all names given by convention. There is truth in many names, perhaps in most; but the giver of names may sometimes have given a false appellation because he did not know the nature of the thing to be named; and the degree of truth or inaccuracy can only be determined by analysis and enquiry.

Plato was necessarily ill equipped for the task which he has undertaken in the Cratylus. Yet the 'divine gift' of reflection supplied in great measure the want of exact knowledge, and many anticipations of the latest discoveries of modern times may be found in this Dialogue. In the following passage he speaks with remarkable accuracy and truth of the manner in which sounds are imitated by means of particular letters.

Soc. My first notions of original names are truly Steph. wild and ridiculous, though I have no objection to 426 impart them to you if you desire, and I hope that you will communicate to me in return anything better which you may have.

Her. Fear not; I will do my best.

Soc. In the first place, the letter $\dot{\rho}$ appears to me to be the general instrument expressing all motion (κίνησις).

But I have not yet explained the meaning of this latter word, which is just "leaus (going); for the letter η was not in use among the ancients, who only employed e; and the root is kiew, which is a foreign form, the same as léval. And the old word kingos will be correctly given as leaus in corresponding modern letters. Assuming this foreign root kiew, and allowing for the change of the η and the insertion of the ν , we have kingois, which should have been kielvyois or elois; and oragis is the negative of lέναι (or είσις), and has been improved into στάσις. Now the letter $\hat{\rho}$, as I was saying, appeared to the imposer of names an excellent instrument for the expression of motion; and he frequently uses the letter for this purpose: for example, in the actual words ρείν and ροή he represents motion by ρ; also in the words τρόμος (trembling), τραχύς (rugged); and again, in words such as κρούειν (strike), θρούειν (crush), έρείκειν (bruise), θρύπτειν (break), κερματίζειν (crumble), δυμβείν (whirl): of all these sorts of movements he generally finds an expression in the letter R, because, as I imagine, he had observed that the tongue was most agitated and least at rest in the pronunciation of this letter, which he therefore used $_{427}$ in order to express motion, just as by the letter ι he expresses the subtle elements which pass through all things. This is why he uses the letter i as imitative of motion, λέναι, ἴεσθαι.

And there is another class of letters, ϕ , ψ , σ and ζ , of which the pronunciation is accompanied by great expenditure of breath; these are used in the imitation of such notions as $\psi \nu \chi \rho \delta \nu$ (shivering), $\zeta \delta \sigma \nu$ (seething), $\sigma \epsilon \iota \epsilon \sigma \theta \sigma \iota$ (to be shaken), $\sigma \epsilon \iota \sigma \mu \delta \sigma$ (shock), and are always introduced by the giver of names when he wants to imitate what is $\phi \nu \sigma \delta \delta \sigma$ (windy). He seems to have thought that the closing and pressure of the tongue in the utterance of δ and τ was expressive

of binding and rest in a place: he further observed the liquid movement of λ , in the pronunciation of which the tongue slips, and in this he found the expression of smoothness, as in $\lambda \epsilon \hat{\iota} os$ (level), and in the word $\hat{\iota} \lambda \iota \iota \tau \theta \hat{\iota} u \epsilon \iota \iota$ (to slip) itself, $\lambda \iota \iota \tau a \rho \hat{\iota} u$ (sleek), in the word $\kappa o \lambda \lambda \hat{\iota} o \delta \hat{\iota} s$ (gluey), and the like: the heavier sound of γ detained the slipping tongue, and the union of the two gave the notion of a glutinous clammy nature, as in $\gamma \lambda \iota \sigma s \rho s s$, $\gamma \lambda \iota \iota u \hat{\iota} \delta s s$.

The ν he observed to be sounded from within, and therefore to have a notion of inwardness; hence he introduced the sound in $\tilde{\epsilon}\nu\delta\sigma\nu$ and $\hat{\epsilon}\nu\tau\delta s$: ω he assigned to the expression of size, and η of length, because they are great letters: σ was the sign of roundness, and therefore there is plenty of σ mixed up in the word $\gamma\sigma\gamma\gamma\dot{\nu}\lambda\sigma\nu$ (round). Thus did the legislator, reducing all things into letters and syllables, and impressing on them names and signs, and out of them by imitation compounding other signs.

PHAEDRUS

1. The philosopher must study the nature of man.

No dialogue of Plato is more characteristic of his style and genius than the Phaedrus. Two persons only are introduced, Socrates and Phaedrus, the same who is mentioned in the Protagoras and who also takes a prominent part in the Symposium. He here appears as the admiring disciple of Lysias, the orator, with whom he has been spending the morning in discourse. He is now starting for a country walk, when he is met by Socrates, whom he induces to accompany him by the promise that he will repeat the speech which he has just heard from Lysias.

Socrates, however, discovers that Phaedrus has got the roll containing the speech under his cloak, and is really engaged in learning it by heart. He insists on hearing the actual words of the orator; and Phaedrus, after some banter has passed between them, agrees

to guide him to a pleasant resting-place, and to read out the speech to him. The spot selected is beneath a tall plane-tree on the banks of the Hissus.

On the way Phaedrus recalls the tradition that Orithyia was carried away by Boreas while playing beside the stream 1, and he asks Socrates whether he believes in these ancient legends. Socrates in reply professes his ignorance about them; but he plainly intimates their puerile and trivial nature. It is enough for him if he can learn something about the nature of man, who is a far more wonderful being than any creation of the old mythologers.

Here Plato is probably expressing his own opinion rather than that of the historical Socrates. He deals with the myths of antiquity in a similar spirit in many of his writings (cp. Euthyph. 6 A, 8 B); and in the Republic (Books II and III) he condemns the greater part of the legends of the Gods and heroes as untrue and unfit to be heard or repeated by the citizens of his ideal state.

Steph. Soc. Let us turn aside and go by the Ilissus; we will also sit down at some quiet spot.

Phaedr. I am fortunate in not having my sandals, and as you never have any, I think that we may go along the brook and cool our feet in the water; this will be the easiest way, and at midday and in the summer is far from being unpleasant.

Soc. Lead on, and look out for a place in which we can sit down.

Phaedr. Do you see that tallest plane-tree in the distance?

Soc. Yes.

Phaedr. There are shade and gentle breezes, and grass on which we may either sit or lie down.

Soc. Move forward.

Phaedr. I should like to know, Socrates, whether the place is not somewhere here at which Boreas is said

¹ According to the story, Orithyia ('the Mountain Maid') was a daughter of Erechtheus, king of Athens, and was carried away by Boreas ('the Northwind') to Thrace. This was one of many legends in which there is a connexion shown between Thrace and Attica.

to have carried off Orithyia from the banks of the Ilicens ?

Soc. Such is the tradition.

Phaedr. And is this the exact spot? The little stream is delightfully clear and bright; I can fancy that there might be maidens playing near.

Soc. I believe that the spot is not exactly here, but about a quarter of a mile lower down, where you cross to the temple of Artemis, and there is, I think, some sort of an altar of Boreas at the place.

Phaedr. I have never noticed it; but I beseech you to tell me, Socrates, do you believe this tale?

Soc. The wise are doubtful, and I should not be singular if, like them, I too doubted. I might have a rational explanation that Orithyia was playing with Pharmacia, when a northern gust carried her over the neighbouring rocks; and this being the manner of her death, she was said to have been carried away by Boreas. There is a discrepancy, however, about the locality; according to another version of the story she was taken from the Areopagus, and not from this place. Now I quite acknowledge that these allegories are very nice, but he is not to be envied who has to invent them: much labour and ingenuity will be required of him; and when he has once begun, he must go on and rehabilitate Hippocentaurs and chimeras dire. Gorgons and winged steeds flow in apace, and numberless other inconceivable and portentous natures. And if he is sceptical about them, and would fain reduce them one after another to the rules of probability, this sort of crude philosophy will take up a great deal of time.

Now I have no leisure for such enquiries; shall I tell you why? I must first know myself, as the Delphian inscription says; to be curious about that which is not 230 my concern, while I am still in ignorance of my own

self, would be ridiculous. And therefore I bid farewell to all this; the common opinion is enough for me. For, as I was saying, I want to know not about this, but about myself: am I a monster more complicated and swollen with passion than the serpent Typho, or a creature of a gentler and simpler sort, to whom Nature has given a diviner and lowlier destiny?

2. The banks of the Ilissus.

Socrates is a confirmed lover of the town, and, as he has just told us, a student of mankind. In the Crito the personified Athenian Laws who are bidding him not attempt to escape after his condemnation, address him thus:—'There is clear proof, Socrates, that we and the city were not displeasing to you. Of all Athenians you have been the most constant resident in the city, which, as you never leave, you may be supposed to love. For you never went out of the city, either to see the games, except once when you went to the Isthmus or to any other place, unless when you were on military service; nor did you travel, as other men do' (52 B). And now that he has been drawn by the 'bait of discourse' outside the circle of the walls of Athens he is surprised by the beauty of nature, and is ready to surrender himself awhile to her spells.

The description of the scene breathes a truly Greck spirit: a few simple outlines suffice to present a clear and perfect picture to the imagination. Moderation, the 'Nothing too much' of the famous Delphian inscription, was the great canon of art in the best days of Hellas, and is no less observed in the Dialogues of Plato than in the sculptures of Pheidias.

Steph. Soc. But let me ask you, friend: have we not reached ²³⁰
He plane-tree to which you were conducting us?

Phaedr. Yes, this is the tree.

Soc. By Herè, a fair resting-place, full of summer sounds and scents. Here is this lofty and spreading plane-tree, and the agnus castus high and clustering, in the fullest blossom and the greatest fragrance; and the stream which flows beneath the plane-tree is deliciously cold to the feet. Judging from the ornaments and

images, this must be a spot sacred to Achelous and the Nymphs. How delightful is the breeze:—so very sweet; and there is a sound in the air shrill and summerlike which makes answer to the chorus of the cicadae. But the greatest charm of all is the grass, like a pillow gently sloping to the head. My dear Phaedrus, you have been an admirable guide.

Phaedr. What an incomprehensible being you are, Socrates: when you are in the country, as you say, you really are like some stranger who is led about by a guide. Do you ever cross the border? I rather think that you never venture even outside the gates.

Soc. Very true, my good friend; and I hope that you will excuse me when you hear the reason, which is, that I am a lover of knowledge, and the men who dwell in the city are my teachers, and not the trees or the country. Though I do indeed believe that you have found a spell with which to draw me out of the city into the country, like a hungry cow before whom a bough or a bunch of fruit is waved. For only hold up before me in like manner a book, and you may lead me all round Attica, and over the wide world. And now having arrived, I intend to lie down, and do you choose any posture in which you can read best.

3. The Soul described under the figure of two winged horses and a charioteer: her wanderings and transmigrations.

Phaedrus now produces the roll and reads the speech of Lysias, which proves to be a frigid composition, designed to demonstrate the superiority of the non-lover over the lover. Socrates does not think much of the speech, and declares that he can himself make a better. Phaedrus takes him at his word, and forces him to deliver his oration. But he has no sooner done so than he is seized with a fit of remorse: he has sinned against Love, and will not wait, like Stesichorus, to lose his eyesight before he utters his recantation. Accordingly he

n

vor. r

yields to the inspiration of the local deities, and makes a speech in which he declares the nature and attributes of Love in glowing terms.

This second speech of Socrates is in many respects one of the most remarkable passages in the writings of Plato. The modern reader, unless, indeed, he be himself of a mystical temperament, can scarcely follow the wild flow of language and the mixture of images in which the philosopher has wrapped and disguised his thoughts.

In order to better understand Plato's meaning, we must remember that in the Phaedrus and the Symposium, Love in the higher sense is but another name for the aspiration of the soul after truth and goodness. The love of earthly beauty is described as arousing in the soul the recollection of the glorious visions which she beheld in a previous existence, and as stimulating her to rise to a higher sphere of thought and being. This is quaintly termed by Plato 'the growing of the wings' by which the soul is upborne and sustained in her flight to the Heaven of Ideas.

The comparison of the soul to a pair of winged steeds and a charioteer, is perhaps best explained by the Platonic division of the soul into three elements, Reason, Passion (or Spirit), and the Appetites. Here Reason is the charioteer, while Passion and the Appetites are the two horses. The union of Reason and Passion to bind the Appetites is a favourite thought with Plato, which we shall find often recurring in the Republic. Thus in Book IV he tells us that in the individual, Passion should be the ally of Reason against the lower principle, and in the state the Guardians (who correspond to Reason), and the warrior class (the spirited element), should combine to keep the mass of people under subjection. In the Timaeus, again, we have the same idea expressed by a different metaphor:—the Appetites are like a wild beast chained in a manger, which Reason, dwelling in the head, controls by the aid of Passion, whose seat is in the breast (Tim. 69, 70).

The Transmigration of Soulsis also a doctrine which appears in many forms in the various writings of Plato, and is perhaps most clearly stated in the Myth at the end of the Republic (x. 614 foll.). The belief did not belong to the primitive circle of Hellenic thought, but is an Eastern or Egyptian idea which was probably introduced by the Ionians of Asia Minor, and passed into popular acceptance through the compositions attributed to Orpheus and the other mythic poets, and through the teaching of philosophers, such as Pherecydes, Pythagoras, and Empedocles (cp. Herod. 2. 123).

It seems to have been adopted by Plato chiefly for two reasons:—

(1) It enabled him in some measure to resolve the eternal problem

of Fate and Free Will, which are not so much opposed as combined

by him. There is in man an original element of evil derived from matter, and so far we may truly say that 'injustice is involuntary.' Yet this propensity may be overcome by the cultivation of good habits, and the practice of philosophy; and when the soul comes to choose a new life at the end of each cycle, she may, if she make a wise choice, commence existence under more favourable circumstances. Thus, according to Plato, we enjoy a real, though limited, freedom of the will.

(2) The doctrine of Metempsychosis also allows room for the principle that punishment is corrective, not vindictive, in its nature. Men have a twofold opportunity of improvement; the chastisements which we undergo in the present life are designed to make us better, and the penalties which we suffer in another world are not of endless duration, but are intended to educate the soul and prepare her to choose wisely at the appointed time. In this introduction of the moral element the Hellenic view of the wanderings of the soul after death marks an advance on the ordinary Oriental conception, which rather contemplates the soul as destined by a natural law to undergo a series of changes in respect of which she has no power of choice.

Soc. ¹The soul through all her being is immortal, for Steph. that which is ever in motion is immortal; but that which 245 moves another and is moved by another, in ceasing to move ceases also to live. Only the self-moving, never leaving self, never ceases to move, and is the fountain and beginning of motion to all that moves besides. Now, the beginning is unbegotten, for that which is begotten has a beginning; but the beginning is begotten of nothing, for if it were begotten of something, then the begotten would not come from a beginning. But if unbegotten, it must also be indestructible; for if beginning were destroyed, there could be no beginning out of anything, nor anything out of a beginning; and all things must have a beginning. And therefore the self-moving is the beginning of motion; and this can neither be destroyed nor begotten, else the whole heavens and all creation would collapse and stand still, and never again have motion or birth. But if the

1 Translated by Cic. Tusc. Quaest. s. 24.

self-moving is proved to be immortal, he who affirms that self-motion is the very idea and essence of the soul will not be put to confusion. For the body which is moved from without is soulless; but that which is moved from within has a soul, for such is the nature 246 of the soul. But if this be true, must not the soul be the self-moving, and therefore of necessity unbegotten and immortal? Enough of the soul's immortality.

Of the nature of the soul, though her true form be ever a theme of large and more than mortal discourse, let me speak briefly, and in a figure. And let the figure be composite—a pair of winged horses and a charioteer. Now the winged horses and the charioteers of the gods are all of them noble and of noble descent, but those of other races are mixed; the human charioteer drives his in a pair; and one of them is noble and of noble breed, and the other is ignoble and of ignoble breed; and the driving of them of necessity gives a great deal of trouble to him. I will endeavour to explain to you in what way the mortal differs from the immortal creature.

The soul in her totality has the care of inanimate being everywhere, and traverses the whoie heaven in divers forms appearing;—when perfect and fully winged she soars upward, and orders the whole world; whereas the imperfect soul, losing her wings and drooping in her flight, at last settles on the solid ground—there, finding a home, she receives an earthly frame which appears to be self-moved, but is really moved by her power; and this composition of soul and body is called a living and mortal creature. For immortal no such union can be reasonably believed to be; although fancy, not having seen nor surely known the nature of God, may imagine an immortal creature having both a body and also a soul which

are united throughout all time. Let that, however, be as God wills, and be spoken of acceptably to him. And now let us ask the reason why the soul loses her wings!

The wing is the corporeal element which is most akin to the divine, and which by nature tends to soar aloft and carry that which gravitates downwards into the upper region, which is the habitation of the gods. The divine is beauty, wisdom, goodness, and the like; and by these the wing of the soul is nourished, and grows apace; but when fed upon evil and foulness and the opposite of good, wastes and falls away. Zeus, the mighty lord, holding the reins of a winged chariot, leads the way in heaven, ordering all and taking care of all; and there follows him the array of gods and demigods, marshalled in eleven bands; Hestia alone abides 247 at home in the house of heaven; of the rest they who are reckoned among the princely twelve march in their appointed order. They see many blessed sights in the inner heaven, and there are many ways to and fro, along which the blessed gods are passing, every one doing his own work; he may follow who will and can. for jealousy has no place in the celestial choir. But when they go to banquet and festival, then they move up the steep to the top of the vault of heaven. The chariots of the gods in even poise, obeying the rein, glide rapidly; but the others labour, for the vicious steed goes heavily, weighing down the charioteer to the earth when his steed has not been thoroughly trained:and this is the hour of agony and extremest conflict for the soul. For the immortals, when they are at the end of their course, go forth and stand upon the outside of heaven, and the revolution of the spheres carries them round, and they behold the things beyond.

But of the heaven which is above the heavens, what

earthly poet ever did or ever will sing worthily? It is such as I will describe; for I must dare to speak the truth, when truth is my theme. There abides the very being with which true knowledge is concerned; the colourless, formless, intangible essence, visible only to mind, the pilot of the soul. The divine intelligence, being nurtured upon mind and pure knowledge, and the intelligence of every soul which is capable of receiving the food proper to it, rejoices at beholding reality, and once more gazing upon truth, is replenished and made glad, until the revolution of the worlds brings her round again to the same place. In the revolution she beholds justice, and temperance, and knowledge absolute, not in the form of generation or of relation, which men call existence, but knowledge absolute in existence absolute: and beholding the other true existences in like manner, and feasting upon them, she passes down into the interior of the heavens and returns home; and there the charioteer putting up his horses at the stall, gives them ambrosia to eat and nectar to drink.

Such is the life of the gods; but of other souls, that which follows God best and is likest to him lifts the head of the charioteer into the outer world, and is carried round in the revolution, troubled indeed by the steeds, and with difficulty beholding true being; while another only rises and falls, and sees, and again fails to see by reason of the unruliness of the steeds. The rest of the souls are also longing after the upper world, and they all follow, but not being strong enough they are carried round below the surface, plunging, treading on one another, each striving to be first; and there is confusion and perspiration and the extremity of effort; and many of them are lamed or have their wings broken through the ill-driving of the charioteers; and all of them after a fruitless toil, not having attained to the

mysteries of true being, go away, and feed upon opinion. The reason why the souls exhibit this exceeding eagerness to behold the plain of truth is that pasturage is found there, which is suited to the highest part of the soul; and the wing on which the soul soars is nourished with this.

And there is a law of Destiny, that the soul which attains any vision of truth in company with a god is preserved from harm until the next period, and if attaining always is always unharmed. But when she is unable to follow, and fails to behold the truth, and through some ill-hap sinks beneath the double load of forgetfulness and vice, and her wings fall from her and she drops to the ground, then the law ordains that this soul shall at her first birth pass, not into any other animal, but only into man; and the soul which has seen most of truth shall come to the birth as a philosopher, or artist, or some musical and loving nature; that which has seen truth in the second degree shall be some righteous king or warrior chief; the soul which is of the third class shall be a politician, or economist, or trader; the fourth shall be a lover of gymnastic toils, or a physician; the fifth shall lead the life of a prophet or hierophant; to the sixth the character of a poet or some other imitative artist will be assigned; to the seventh the life of an artisan or husbandman: to the eighth that of a sophist or demagogue; to the ninth that of a tyrant;—all these are states of probation, in which he who does righteously improves, and he who does unrighteously, deteriorates his lot.

Ten thousand years must elapse before the soul of each one can return to the place from whence she came, for she cannot grow her wings in less; only 249 the soul of a philosopher, guileless and true, or the soul of a lover, who is not devoid of philosophy, may

acquire wings in the third of the recurring periods of a thousand years; he is distinguished from the ordinary good man who gains wings in three thousand years:— and they who choose this life three times in succession have wings given them, and go away at the end of three thousand years. But the others receive judgment when they have completed their first life, and after the judgment they go, some of them to the houses of correction which are under the earth, and are punished; others to some place in heaven whither they are lightly borne by justice, and there they live in a manner worthy of the life which they led here when in the form of men.

And at the end of the first thousand years the good souls and also the evil souls both come to draw lots and choose their second life, and they may take any which they please. The soul of a man may pass into the life of a beast, or from the beast return again into the man. But the soul which has never seen the truth will not pass into the human form. For a man must have intelligence of universals, and be able to proceed from the many particulars of sense to one conception of reason: —this is the recollection of those things which our soul once saw while following God-when regardless of that which we now call being she raised her head up towards the true being. And therefore the mind of the philosopher alone has wings; and this is just, for he is always, according to the measure of his abilities. clinging in recollection to those things in which God abides, and in beholding which He is what He is. And he who employs aright these memories is ever being initiated into perfect mysteries and alone becomes truly perfect. But, as he forgets earthly interests and

¹ The philosopher alone is not subject to judgment ($\kappa\rho i\sigma\iota s$), for he has never lost the vision of truth.

is rapt in the divine, the vulgar deem him mad, and rebuke him; they do not see that he is inspired.

Thus far I have been speaking of the fourth and last kind of madness, which is imputed to him who, when he sees the beauty of earth, is transported with the recollection of the true beauty; he would like to fly away, but he cannot; he is like a bird fluttering and looking upward and careless of the world below; and he is therefore thought to be mad. And I have shown this of all inspirations to be the noblest and highest and the offspring of the highest to him who has or shares in it, and that he who loves the beautiful is called a lover because he partakes of it. For, as has been already said, every soul of man has in the way of nature beheld true being; this was the condition of her passing into the form of man.

But all souls do not easily recall the things of the 250 other world: they may have seen them for a short time only, or they may have been unfortunate in their earthly lot, and, having had their hearts turned to unrighteousness through some corrupting influence, they may have lost the memory of the holy things which once they saw. Few only retain an adequate remembrance of them; and they, when they behold here any image of that other world, are rapt in amazement; but they are ignorant of what this rapture means, because they do not clearly perceive. For there is no light of justice or temperance or any of the higher ideas which are precious to souls in the earthly copies of them: they are seen through a glass dimly; and there are few who, going to the images, behold in them the realities, and these only with difficulty. There was a time when with the rest of the happy band they saw beauty shining in brightness,—we philosophers following in the train of Zeus, others in company with other

gods; and then we beheld the beatific vision and were initiated into a mystery which may be truly called most blessed, celebrated by us in our state of innocence, before we had any experience of evils to come, when we were admitted to the sight of apparitions innocent and simple and calm and happy, which we beheld shining in pure light, pure ourselves and not yet enshrined in that living tomb which we carry about, now that we are imprisoned in the body, like an oyster in his shell. Let me linger over the memory of scenes which have passed away.

But of beauty, I repeat again that we saw her there shining in company with the celestial forms; and coming to earth we find her here too, shining in clearness through the clearest aperture of sense. For sight is the most piercing of our bodily senses; though not by that is wisdom seen; her loveliness would have been transporting if there had been a visible image of her, and the other ideas, if they had visible counterparts, would be equally lovely. But this is the privilege of beauty, that being the loveliest she is also the most palpable to sight.

Now he who is not newly initiated or who has become corrupted, does not easily rise out of this world to the sight of true beauty in the other; he looks only at her earthly namesake, and instead of being awed at the sight of her, he is given over to pleasure, and like 251 a brutish beast he rushes on to enjoy and beget; he consorts with wantonness, and is not afraid or ashamed of pursuing pleasure in violation of nature. But he whose initiation is recent, and who has been the spectator of many glories in the other world, is amazed when he sees any one having a godlike face or form, which is the expression of divine beauty; and at first a shudder runs through him, and again the old awe

steals over him; then looking upon the face of his beloved as of a god he reverences him, and if he were not afraid of being thought a downright madman, he would sacrifice to his beloved as to the image of a god; then while he gazes on him there is a sort of reaction, and the shudder passes into an unusual heat and perspiration; for, as he receives the effluence of beauty through the eyes, the wing moistens and he warms. And as he warms, the parts out of which the wing grew, and which had been hitherto closed and rigid, and had prevented the wing from shooting forth, are melted, and as nourishment streams upon him, the lower end of the wing begins to swell and grow from the root upwards; and the growth extends under the whole soul—for once the whole was winged.

During this process the whole soul is all in a state of ebullition and effervescence.—which may be compared to the irritation and uneasiness in the gums at the time of cutting teeth,—bubbles up, and has a feeling of uneasiness and tickling; but when in like manner the soul is beginning to grow wings, the beauty of the beloved meets her eye and she receives the sensible warm motion of particles which flow towards her, therefore called emotion ("μερος), and is refreshed and warmed by them, and then she ceases from her pain with joy. But when she is parted from her beloved and her moisture fails, then the orifices of the passage out of which the wing shoots dry up and close, and intercept the germ of the wing; which, being shut up with the emotion, throbbing as with the pulsations of an artery, pricks the aperture which is nearest, until at length the entire soul is pierced and maddened and pained, and at the recollection of beauty is again delighted.

And from both of them together the soul is oppressed

at the strangeness of her condition, and is in a great strait and excitement, and in her madness can neither sleep by night nor abide in her place by day. And wherever she thinks that she will behold the beautiful one, thither in her desire she runs. And when she has seen him, and bathed herself in the waters of beauty, her constraint is loosened, and she is refreshed, and 252 has no more pangs and pains; and this is the sweetest of all pleasures at the time, and is the reason why the soul of the lover will never forsake his beautiful one, whom he esteems above all; he has forgotten mother and brethren and companions, and he thinks nothing of the neglect and loss of his property; the rules and proprieties of life, on which he formerly prided himself. he now despises, and is ready to sleep like a servant, wherever he is allowed, as near as he can to his desired one, who is the object of his worship, and the physician who can alone assuage the greatness of his pain. And this state, my dear imaginary youth to whom I am talking, is by men called love, and among the gods has a name at which you, in your simplicity, may be inclined to mock; there are two lines in the apocryphal writings of Homer in which the name occurs. One of them is rather outrageous, and not altogether metrical. They are as follows:-

> 'Mortals call him fluttering love, But the immortals call him winged one, Because the growing of wings 1 is a necessity to him.

You may believe this, but not unless you like. At any rate the loves of lovers and their causes are such as I have described.

Now the lover who is taken to be the attendant of Zeus is better able to bear the winged god, and can

¹ Or, reading πτερόφοιτον, 'the movement of wings.'

endure a heavier burden; but the attendants and companions of Ares, when under the influence of love, if they fancy that they have been at all wronged, are ready to kill and put an end to themselves and their beloved. And he who follows in the train of any other god, while he is unspoiled and the impression lasts, honours and imitates him, as far as he is able; and after the manner of his God he behaves in his intercourse with his beloved and with the rest of the world during the first period of his earthly existence. Every one chooses his love from the ranks of beauty according to his character, and this he makes his god, and fashions and adorns as a sort of image which he is to fall down and worship.

The followers of Zeus desire that their beloved should have a soul like him; and therefore they seek out some one of a philosophical and imperial nature, and when they have found him and loved him, they do all they can to confirm such a nature in him, and if they have no experience of such a disposition hitherto. they learn of any one who can teach them, and themselves follow in the same way. And they have the less difficulty in finding the nature of their own god in 253 themselves, because they have been compelled to gaze intensely on him; their recollection clings to him, and they become possessed of him, and receive from him their character and disposition, so far as man can participate in God. The qualities of their god they attribute to the beloved, wherefore they love him all the more, and if, like the Bacchic Nymphs, they draw inspiration from Zeus, they pour out their own fountain upon him, wanting to make him as like as possible to their own god. But those who are the followers of Herè seek a royal love, and when they have found him they do just the same with him; and in like manner the

followers of Apollo, and of every other god, walking in the ways of their god, seek a love who is to be made like him whom they serve, and when they have found him, they themselves imitate their god, and persuade their love to do the same, and educate him into the manner and nature of the god as far as they each can; for no feelings of envy or jealousy are entertained by them towards their beloved, but they do their utmost to create in him the greatest likeness of themselves and of the god whom they honour. Thus fair and blissful to the beloved is the desire of the inspired lover, and the initiation of which I speak into the mysteries of true love, if he be captured by the lover and their purpose is effected. Now the beloved is taken captive in the following manner:—

As I said at the beginning of this tale, I divided each soul into three—two horses and a charioteer; and one of the horses was good and the other bad: the division may remain, but I have not yet explained in what the goodness or badness of either consists, and to that I will now proceed. The right-hand horse is upright and cleanly made; he has a lofty neck and an aquiline nose: his colour is white, and his eyes dark; he is a lover of honour and modesty and temperance, and the follower of true glory; he needs no touch of the whip, but is guided by word and admonition only. The other is a crooked lumbering animal, put together anyhow; he has a short thick neck; he is flat-faced and of a dark colour, with grey eyes and blood-red complexion: the mate of insolence and pride, shag-eared and deaf. hardly yielding to whip and spur.

Now when the charioteer beholds the vision of love, and has his whole soul warmed through sense, 254 and is full of the prickings and ticklings of desire,

¹ Or with grey and blood-shot eyes.

the cbedient steed, then as always under the government of shame, refrains from leaping on the beloved; but the other, heedless of the pricks and of the blows of the whip, plunges and runs away, giving all manner of trouble to his companion and the charioteer, whom he forces to approach the beloved and to remember the joys of love. They at first indignantly oppose him and will not be urged on to do terrible and unlawful deeds; but at last, when he persists in plaguing them, they yield and agree to do as he bids them.

And now they are at the spot and behold the flashing beauty of the beloved; which when the charioteer sees, his memory is carried to the true beauty, whom he beholds in company with Modesty like an image placed upon a holy pedestal. He sees her, but he is afraid and falls backwards in adoration. and by his fall is compelled to pull back the reins with such violence as to bring both the steeds on their haunches, the one willing and unresisting, the unruly one very unwilling; and when they have gone back a little, the one is overcome with shame and wonder. and his whole soul is bathed in perspiration; the other, when the pain is over which the bridle and the fall had given him, having with difficulty taken breath, is full of wrath and reproaches, which he heaps upon the charioteer and his fellow-steed, for want of courage and manhood, declaring that they have been false to their agreement and guilty of desertion. Again they refuse. and again he urges them on, and will scarce yield to their prayer that he would wait until another time.

When the appointed hour comes, they make as if they had forgotten, and he reminds them, fighting and neighing and dragging them on, until at length he, on the same thoughts intent, forces them to draw near again. And when they are near he stoops his head and puts up his tail, and takes the bit in his teeth and pulls shamelessly. Then the charioteer is worse off than ever; he falls back like a racer at the barrier, and with a still more violent wrench drags the bit out of the teeth of the wild steed and covers his abusive tongue and jaws with blood, and forces his legs and haunches to the ground and punishes him sorely. And when this has happened several times and the villain has ceased from his wanton way, he is tamed and humbled, and follows the will of the charioteer, and when he sees the beautiful one he is ready to die of fear. And from that time forward the soul of the lover follows the beloved in modesty and holy fear.

255 And so the beloved who, like a god, has received every true and loyal service from his lover, not in pretence but in reality, being also himself of a nature friendly to his admirer 1, if in former days he has blushed to own his passion and turned away his lover, because his youthful companions or others slanderously told him that he would be disgraced, now as years advance. at the appointed age and time, is led to receive him into communion. For fate which has ordained that there shall be no friendship among the evil has also ordained that there shall ever be friendship among the good. And the beloved when he has received him into communion and intimacy, is quite amazed at the good-will of the lover; he recognises that the inspired friend is worth all other friends or kinsmen; they have nothing of friendship in them worthy to be compared with his. And when this feeling continues and he is nearer to him and embraces him, in gymnastic exercises and at other times of meeting, then the fountain of that stream, which Zeus when he was in love with Ganymede named

¹ Omitting είς ταὐτὸν ἄγει τὴν φιλίαν.

Desire, overflows upon the lover, and some enters into his soul, and some when he is filled flows out again; and as a breeze or an echo rebounds from the smooth rocks and returns whence it came, so does the stream of beauty, passing through the eyes which are the windows of the soul come back to the beautiful one; there arriving and quickening the passages of the wings, watering them and inclining them to grow, and filling the soul of the beloved also with love.

And thus he loves, but he knows not what; he does not understand and cannot explain his own state; he appears to have caught the infection of blindness from another: the lover is his mirror in whom he is beholding himself, but he is not aware of this. When he is with the lover, both cease from their pain, but when he is away then he longs as he is longed for, and has love's image, love for love (Anteros) lodging in his breast, which he calls and believes to be not love but friendship only, and his desire is as the desire of the other, but weaker; he wants to see him, touch him, kiss, embrace him, and probably not long afterwards his desire is accomplished. When they meet, the wanton steed of the lover has a word to say to the charioteer: he would like to have 256 a little pleasure in return for many pains, but the wanton steed of the beloved says not a word, for he is bursting with passion which he understands not:—he throws his arms round the lover and embraces him as his dearest friend; and, when they are side by side, he is not in a state in which he can refuse the lover anvthing, if he ask him; although his fellow-steed and the charioteer oppose him with the arguments of shame and reason.

After this their happiness depends upon their selfcontrol; if the better elements of the mind which E

VOL. 1.

lead to order and philosophy prevail, then they pass their life here in happiness and harmony-masters of themselves and orderly-enslaving the vicious and emancipating the virtuous elements of the soul; and when the end comes, they are light and winged for flight, having conquered in one of the three heavenly or truly Olympian victories; nor can human discipline or divine inspiration confer any greater blessing on man than this. If, on the other hand, they leave philosophy and lead the lower life of ambition, then probably, after wine or in some other careless hour, the two wanton animals take the two souls when off their guard and bring them together, and they accomplish that desire of their hearts which to the many is bliss; and this having once enjoyed they continue to enjoy, yet rarely, because they have not the approval of the whole soul. They too are dear, but not so dear to one another as the others, either at the time of their love or afterwards. They consider that they have given and taken from each other the most sacred pledges, and they may not break them and fall into enmity. At last they pass out of the body, unwinged, but eager to soar, and thus obtain no mean reward of love and madness. For those who have once begun the heavenward pilgrimage may not go down again to darkness and the journey beneath the earth, but they live in light always; happy companions in their pilgrimage, and when the time comes at which they receive their wings they have the same plumage because of their love.

Thus great are the heavenly blessings which the friendship of a lover will confer upon you, my youth. Whereas the attachment of the non-lover, which is alloyed with a worldly prudence and has worldly and niggardly ways of doling out benefits, will breed in your soul those vulgar qualities which the populace applaud,

will send you bowling round the earth during a period of nine thousand years, and leave you a fool in the world below.

4. The Art of Rhetoric.

When Socrates has finished his speech, the subject of the Dialogue changes... Upon reflection, he is rather proud of his second oration. There was method in his madness; whereas Lysias had dragged in his topics by the head and shoulders, and arranged them in no sort of order. Why should not he and Phaedrus spend the rest of the day in considering the principles of style and composition, taking as their text the speeches which have just been delivered? Phaedrus agrees with delight to the proposal; he is an insatiable lover of discourse, and nothing could be more to his mind.

Accordingly, the Art of Rhetoric becomes the theme of the remainder of the Dialogue. Plato does not treat the subject in a formal manner, as his pupil Aristotle afterwards did, and he makes merry over the 'brachyologies and eikonologies and other hard names' in which Polus and Evenus revelled. veil of humour and irony, however, there lies a genuine and earnest purpose. He selt that Greek literature had nearly reached its highest point of perfection, and was already beginning to lose its creative power and originality. The Sophists had taught their scholars new graces and ornaments of style (cp. Symp. 185 C), and had really contributed to the development of prose by their studies in grammar and syntax. But they put form in the place of substance; the matter was naught to them, so long as the theme was well treated: 'they descanted on the virtues of the heroes, or even made things like salt the subject of eloquent discourses' (Symp. 177 B),

Plato desires to create a nobler art of rhetoric which may be applied to a nobler end. The composition should have a regular arrangement of the parts according to the natural order of the topics: it should be clear and simple, and exactly adapted to the understanding of those who are addressed. Even more important is the character of the author, who must be high-minded and virtuous himself, and also able to implant his thoughts and aspirations in the souls of other men. The same spirit may be observed to reappear in the Laws, where, after the poets have been placed under a censorship, it is added that the poet whose works have been accepted must be fifty years old at least, and a citizen of good repute in the state (viii. 829 D).

It is not necessary to suppose that Plato is equally in earnest when he declares that speech is to be preferred to writing. This was probably only a passing fancy, suggested by the love of discourse which was so natural to a Greek, and by the fact that instruction was imparted in Greece vivâ voce rather than by means of writing.

(a) The True Orator.

Steph. Soc. I conceive Pericles to have been the most accomplished of rhetoricians.

Phaedr. What of that?

Soc. All the great arts require discussion and high 270 speculation about the truths of nature; hence come loftiness of thought and completeness of execution. And this, as I conceive, was the quality which, in addition to his natural gifts, Pericles acquired from his intercourse with Anaxagoras whom he happened to know. He was thus imbued with the higher philosophy, and attained the knowledge of Mind and the negative of Mind, which were favourite themes of Anaxagoras, and applied what suited his purpose to the art of speaking.

Phaedr. Explain.

Soc. Rhetoric is like medicine.

Phaedr. How so?

Soc. Why, because medicine has to define the nature of the body and rhetoric of the soul—if we would proceed, not empirically but scientifically, in the one case to impart health and strength by giving medicine and food, in the other to implant the conviction or virtue which you desire, by the right application of words and training.

Phaedr. There, Socrates, I suspect that you are right.

Soc. And do you think that you can know the nature of the soul intelligently without knowing the nature of the whole?

Phaedr. Hippocrates the Asclepiad says that the nature even of the body can only be understood as a whole !.

Soc. Yes, friend, and he was right:—still, we ought not to be content with the name of Hippocrates, but to examine and see whether his argument agrees with his conception of nature.

Phaedr. I agree.

Soc. Then consider what truth as well as Hippocrates says about this or about any other nature. Ought we not to consider first whether that which we wish to learn and to teach is a simple or multiform thing, and if simple, then to enquire what power it has of acting or being acted upon in relation to other things, and if multiform, then to number the forms; and see first in the case of one of them, and then in the case of all of them, what is that power of acting or being acted upon which makes each and all of them to be what they are?

Phaedr. You may very likely be right, Socrates.

Soc. The method which proceeds without analysis is like the groping of a blind man. Yet, surely, he who is an artist ought not to admit of a comparison with the blind or deaf. The rhetorician, who teaches his pupil to speak scientifically, will particularly set forth the nature of that being to which he addresses his speeches; and this I conceive to be the soul.

Phaedr. Certainly.

Soc. His whole effort is directed to the soul; for in 271 that he seeks to produce conviction.

Phaedr. Yes.

Soc. Then clearly, Thrasymachus or any one else who teaches rhetoric in earnest will give an exact description of the nature of the soul; which will enable

¹ Cp. Charmides, 156 C.

us to see whether she be single and same, or, like the body, multiform. That is what we should call showing the nature of the soul.

Phaedr. Exactly.

Soc. He will explain, secondly, the mode in which she acts or is acted upon.

Phaedr. True.

Soc. Thirdly, having classified men and speeches, and their kinds and affections, and adapted them to one another, he will tell the reasons of his arrangement, and show why one soul is persuaded by a particular form of argument, and another not.

Phaedr. You have hit upon a very good way.

Soc. Yes, that is the true and only way in which any subject can be set forth or treated by rules of art, whether in speaking or writing. But the writers of the present day, at whose feet you have sat, craftily conceal the nature of the soul which they know quite well. Nor, until they adopt our method of reading and writing, can we admit that they write by rules of art?

Phaedr. What is our method?

Soc. I cannot give you the exact details; but I should like to tell you generally, as far as is in my power, how a man ought to proceed according to rules of art.

Phaedr. Let me hear.

Soc. Oratory is the art of enchanting the soul, and therefore he who would be an orator has to learn the differences of human souls—they are so many and of such a nature, and from them come the differences between man and man. Having proceeded thus far in his analysis, he will next divide speeches into their different classes:—'Such and such persons,' he will say, 'are affected by this or that kind of speech in this or that way,' and he will tell you why. The pupil must

have a good theoretical notion of them first, and then he must have experience of them in actual life, and be able to follow them with all his senses about him, or he will never get beyond the precepts of his masters.

But when he understands what persons are persuaded by what arguments, and sees the person about whom he 272 was speaking in the abstract actually before him, and knows that it is he, and can say to himself, 'This is the man or this is the character who ought to have a certain argument applied to him in order to convince him of a certain opinion: '-he who knows all this, and knows also when he should speak and when he should refrain. and when he should use pithy sayings, pathetic appeals, sensational effects, and all the other modes of speech which he has learned; -when, I say, he knows the times and seasons of all these things, then, and not till then, he is a perfect master of his art; but if he fail in any of these points, whether in speaking or teaching or writing them, and yet declares that he speaks by rules of art, he who says 'I don't believe you' has the better of him.

Well, the teacher will say, is this, Phaedrus and Socrates, your account of the so-called art of rhetoric, or am I to look for another?

Phaedr. He must take this, Socrates, for there is no possibility of another, and yet the creation of such an art is not easy.

(b) The tale of Thamus and Theuth.

Soc. I have heard a tradition of the ancients, whether $_{\rm Steph}$ true or not they only know; although if we had found the truth ourselves, do you think that we should care much about the opinions of men?

Phaedr. Your question needs no answer; but I wish

that you would tell me what you say that you have heard.

Soc. At the Egyptian city of Naucratis, there was a famous old god, whose name was Theuth; the bird which is called the Ibis is sacred to him, and he was the inventor of many arts, such as arithmetic and calculation and geometry and astronomy and draughts and dice, but his great discovery was the use of letters. Now in those days the god Thamus was the king of the whole country of Egypt; and he dwelt in that great city of Upper Egypt which the Hellenes call Egyptian Thebes, and the god himself is called by them Ammon. To him came Theuth and showed his inventions, desiring that the other Egyptians might be allowed to have the benefit of them; he enumerated them, and Thamus enquired about their several uses, and praised some of them and censured others, as he approved or disapproved of them.

It would take a long time to repeat all that Thamus said to Theuth in praise or blame of the various arts. But when they came to letters, This, said Theuth, will make the Egyptians wiser and give them better memories; it is a specific both for the memory and for the wit. Thamus replied: O most ingenious Theuth, the parent or inventor of an art is not always the best judge of the utility or inutility of his own 275 inventions to the users of them. And in this instance. you who are the father of letters, from a paternal love of your own children have been led to attribute to them a quality which they cannot have; for this discovery of yours will create forgetfulness in the learners' souls. because they will not use their memories; they will trust to the external written characters and not remember of themselves. The specific which you have discovered is an aid not to memory, but to reminiscence, and you give your disciples not truth, but only the semblance of truth; they will be hearers of many things and will have learned nothing; they will appear to be omniscient and will generally know nothing; they will be tiresome company, having the show of wisdom without the reality.

Phaedr. Yes, Socrates, you can easily invent tales of Egypt, or of any other country.

Soc. There was a tradition in the temple of Dodona that oaks first gave prophetic utterances. The men of old, unlike in their simplicity to young philosophy, deemed that if they heard the truth even from 'oak or rock,' it was enough for them; whereas you seem to consider not whether a thing is or is not true, but who the speaker is and from what country the tale comes.

Phaedr. I acknowledge the justice of your rebuke; and I think that the Theban is right in his view about letters.

(c) Speech better than writing.

Soc. I cannot help feeling, Phaedrus, that writing is Steph. unfortunately like painting; for the creations of the painter have the attitude of life, and yet if you ask them a question they preserve a solemn silence. And the same may be said of speeches. You would imagine that they had intelligence, but if you want to know anything and put a question to one of them, the speaker always gives one unvarying answer. And when they have been once written down they are tumbled about anywhere among those who may or may not understand them, and know not to whom they should reply, to whom not: and, if they are maltreated or abused, they have no parent to protect them; and they cannot protect or defend themselves.

Phaedr. That again is most true.

Soc. Is there not another kind of word or speech far better than this, and having far greater power—a son 276 of the same family, but lawfully begotten?

Phaedr. Whom do you mean, and what is his origin? Soc. I mean an intelligent word graven in the soul of the learner, which can defend itself, and knows when to speak and when to be silent.

Phaedr. You mean the living word of knowledge which has a soul, and of which the written word is properly no more than an image?

Soc. Yes, of course that is what I mean. And now may I be allowed to ask you a question: Would a husbandman, who is a man of sense, take the seeds, which he values and which he wishes to bear fruit, and in sober seriousness, plant them during the heat of summer, in some garden of Adonis, that he may rejoice when he sees them in eight days appearing in beauty? at least he would do so, if at all, only for the sake of amusement and pastime. But when he is in earnest he sows in fitting soil, and practises husbandry, and is satisfied if in eight months the seeds which he has sown arrive at perfection?

Phaedr. Yes, Socrates, that will be his way when he is in earnest; he will do the other, as you say, only in play.

Soc. And can we suppose that he who knows the just and good and honourable has less understanding than the husbandman about his own seeds?

Phaedr. Certainly not.

Soc. Then he will not seriously incline to 'write' his thoughts 'in water' with pen and ink, sowing words which can neither speak for themselves nor teach the truth adequately to others?

Phaedr. No, that is not likely.

Soc. No, that is not likely—in the garden of letters

he will sow and plant, but only for the sake of recreation and amusement; he will write them down as memorials to be treasured against the forgetfulness of old age, by himself, or by any other old man who is treading the same path. He will rejoice in beholding their tender growth; and while others are refreshing their souls with banqueting and the like, this will be the pastime in which his days are spent.

Phaedr. A pastime, Socrates, as noble as the other is ignoble, the pastime of a man who can be amused by serious talk, and can discourse merrily about justice and the like.

Soc. True, Phaedrus. But nobler far is the serious pursuit of the dialectician, who, finding a congenial soul, by the help of science sows and plants therein words which are able to help themselves and him who planted 277 them, and are not unfruitful, but have in them a seed which others brought up in different soils render immortal, making the possessors of it happy to the utmost extent of human happiness.

(d) The true art of composition.

Soc. Until a man knows the truth of the several Steph. particulars of which he is writing or speaking, and is able to define them as they are, and having defined them again to divide them until they can be no longer divided, and until in like manner he is able to discern the nature of the soul, and discover the different modes of discourse which are adapted to different natures, and to arrange and dispose them in such a way that the simple form of speech may be addressed to the simpler nature, and the complex and composite to the more complex nature—until he has accomplished all this, he will be unable to handle arguments according to rules

of art, as far as their nature allows them to be subjected to art, either for the purpose of teaching or persuading; —such is the view which is implied in the whole preceding argument.

Phaedr. Yes, that was our view, certainly.

Soc. Secondly, as to the censure which was passed on the speaking or writing of discourses, and how they might be rightly or wrongly censured—did not our previous argument show—?

Phaedr. Show what?

Soc. That whether Lysias or any other writer that ever was or will be, whether private man or statesman, proposes laws and so becomes the author of a political treatise, fancying that there is any great certainty and clearness in his performance, the fact of his so writing is only a disgrace to him, whatever men may say. For not to know the nature of justice and injustice, and good and evil, and not to be able to distinguish the dream from the reality, cannot in truth be otherwise than disgraceful to him, even though he have the applause of the whole world.

Phaedr. Certainly.

Soc. But he who thinks that in the written word there is necessarily much which is not serious, and that neither poetry nor prose, spoken or written, is of any great value, if, like the compositions of the rhapsodes, 278 they are only recited in order to be believed, and not with any view to criticism or instruction; and who thinks that even the best of writings are but a reminiscence of what we know, and that only in principles of justice and goodness and nobility taught and communicated orally for the sake of instruction and graven in the soul, which is the true way of writing, is there clearness and perfection and seriousness, and that such principles are a man's own and his legitimate offspring;—being, in the

first place, the word which he finds in his own bosom; secondly, the brethren and descendants and relations of his idea which have been duly implanted by him in the souls of others;—and who cares for them and no others—this is the right sort of man; and you and I, Phaedrus, would pray that we may become like him.

Phaedr. That is most assuredly my desire and prayer.

Soc. And now the play is played out; and of rhetoric enough. Go and tell Lysias that to the fountain and school of the Nymphs we went down, and were bidden by them to convey a message to him and to other composers of speeches—to Homer and other writers of poems, whether set to music or not; and to Solon and others who have composed writings in the form of political discourses which they would term laws—to all of them we are to say that if their compositions are based on knowledge of the truth, and they can defend or prove them, when they are put to the test, by spoken arguments, which leave their writings poor in comparison of them, then they are to be called, not only poets, orators, legislators, but are worthy of a higher name, befitting the serious pursuit of their life.

Phaedr. What name would you assign to them?

Soc. Wise, I may not call them; for that is a great name which belongs to God alone,—lovers of wisdom or philosophers is their modest and befitting title.

Phaedr. Very suitable.

Soc. And he who cannot rise above his own compilations and compositions, which he has been long patching and piecing, adding some and taking away some, may be justly called poet or speech-maker or law-maker.

ION

The Inspiration of the Poet.

The Ion, which is one of the shortest works of Plato, relates a conversation between Socrates and the rhapsode, Ion of Ephesus. The latter was a member of a class of professional reciters of the Epic poets, and more especially of Homer. They were not scholars or commentators, such as Hippias and other Sophists had already begun to be, but went about the country and repeated to the crowds who assembled at the festivals, long passages of poetry with appropriate accompaniments of voice and gesture. In more ancient times they had been the precursors of the drama, and are therefore rightly classed by Plato with the actors in the chain of descent from the Muses.

The brief dialogue is designed to show that the poet, like every other artist, is a creature of inspiration (cp. a passage in the Phaedrus, 245 A:—'He who, having no touch of the Muses' madness in his soul, comes to the door, and thinks that he will get into the temple by the help of art,—he, I say, and his poetry are not admitted'). Ion, who is depicted as a vain and simple character, is proud of his skill in his profession, and imagines that he knows all the arts because he knows the lines in which Homer refers to them. He is easily driven by Socrates into a dilemma:—Ether he does not really know them and only pretends that he does; in which case he is dishonest: or his knowledge is merely an inspiration which he derives from the poet whose words he repeats. Ion reluctantly accepts the 'nobler alternative': he would rather be thought inspired than dishonest.

Steph. Ion. I CANNOT deny what you say, Socrates. Never
533 theless I am conscious in my own self, and the world
agrees with me in thinking, that I do speak better and
have more to say about Homer than any other man.
But I do not speak equally well about others—tell me
the reason of this.

Soc. I perceive, Ion; and I will proceed to explain to you what I imagine to be the reason of this. The gift

which you possess of speaking excellently about Homer is not an art, but, as I was just saying, an inspiration; there is a divinity moving you, like that contained in the stone which Euripides calls a magnet, but which is commonly known as the stone of Heraclea. This stone not only attracts iron rings, but also imparts to them a similar power of attracting other rings; and sometimes you may see a number of pieces of iron and rings suspended from one another so as to form quite a long chain: and all of them derive their power of suspension from the original stone. In like manner the Muse first of all inspires men herself; and from these inspired persons a chain of other persons is suspended, who take the inspiration. For all good poets, epic as well as lyric, compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed. And as the 534 Corvbantian revellers when they dance are not in their right mind, so the lyric poets are not in their right mind when they are composing their beautiful strains: but when falling under the power of music and metre they are inspired and possessed; like Bacchic maidens who draw milk and honey from the rivers when they are under the influence of Dionysus but not when they are in their right mind. And the soul of the lyric poet does the same, as they themselves say; for they tell us that they bring songs from honeyed fountains, culling them out of the gardens and dells of the Muses; they, like the bees, winging their way from flower to flower.

And this is true. For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him: when he has not attained to this state, he is powerless and is unable to utter his oracles. Many are the noble words in which poets

64 *ION*

speak concerning the actions of men; but like vourself when speaking about Homer, they do not speak of them by any rules of art: they are simply inspired to utter that to which the Muse impels them, and that only: and when inspired, one of them will make dithyrambs, another hymns of praise, another choral strains, another epic or iambic verses—and he who is good at one is not good at any other kind of verse: for not by art does the poet sing, but by power divine. Had he learned by rules of art, he would have known how to speak not of one theme only, but of all; and therefore God takes away the minds of poets, and uses them as his ministers, as he also uses diviners and holy prophets, in order that we who hear them may know them to be speaking not of themselves who utter these priceless words in a state of unconsciousness, but that God himself is the speaker, and that through them he is conversing with us. And Tynnichus the Chalcidian affords a striking instance of what I am saying: he wrote nothing that any one would care to remember but the famous paean which is in every one's mouth, one of the finest poems ever written, simply an invention of the Muses, as he himself says. For in this way the God would seem to indicate to us and not allow us to doubt that these beautiful poems are not human, or the work of man, but divine and the work of God; and that the poets are only the interpreters of the Gods by whom they are severally possessed. Was not this the lesson which the God intended to teach when by the mouth of the 535 worst of poets he sang the best of songs? Am I not right, Ion?

Ion. Yes, indeed, Socrates, I feel that you are; for your words touch my soul, and I am persuaded that good poets by a divine inspiration interpret the things of the Gods to us.

Soc. And you rhapsodists are the interpreters of the poets?

Ion. There again you are right.

Soc. Then you are the interpreters of interpreters?

Ion. Precisely.

Soc. I wish you would frankly tell me, Ion, what I am going to ask of you: When you produce the greatest effect upon the audience in the recitation of some striking passage, such as the apparition of Odysseus leaping forth on the floor, recognized by the suitors and casting his arrows at his feet, or the description of Achilles rushing at Hector, or the sorrows of Andromache, Hecuba, or Priam,—are you in your right mind? Are you not carried out of yourself, and does not your soul in an ecstasy seem to be among the persons or places of which you are speaking, whether they are in Ithaca or in Troy or whatever may be the scene of the poem?

Ion. That proof strikes home to me, Socrates. For I must frankly confess that at the tale of pity my eyes are filled with tears, and when I speak of horrors, my hair stands on end and my heart throbs.

Soc. Well, Ion, and what are we to say of a man who at a sacrifice or festival, when he is dressed in holiday attire, and has golden crowns upon his head, of which nobody has robbed him, appears weeping or panic-stricken in the presence of more than twenty thousand friendly faces, when there is no one despoiling or wronging him;—is he in his right mind or is he not?

Ion. No indeed, Socrates, I must say that, strictly speaking, he is not in his right mind.

Soc. And are you aware that you produce similar effects on most of the spectators?

Ion. Only too well; for I look down upon them from

66 *ION*

the stage, and behold the various emotions of pity, wonder, sternness, stamped upon their countenances when I am speaking: and I am obliged to give my very best attention to them; for if I make them cry I myself shall laugh, and if I make them laugh I myself shall cry when the time of payment arrives.

Soc. Do you know that the spectator is the last of the rings which, as I am saying, receive the power of the 536 original magnet from one another? The rhapsode like yourself and the actor are intermediate links, and the poet himself is the first of them. Through all these the God sways the souls of men in any direction which he pleases, and makes one man hang down from another. Thus there is a vast chain of dancers and masters and under-masters of choruses, who are suspended, as if from the stone, at the side of the rings which hang down from the Muse. And every poet has some Muse from whom he is suspended, and by whom he is said to be possessed, which is nearly the same thing; for he is taken hold of.

And from these first rings, which are the poets, depend others, some deriving their inspiration from Orpheus, others from Musaeus; but the greater number are possessed and held by Homer. Of whom, Ion, you are one, and are possessed by Homer; and when any one repeats the words of another poet you go to sleep, and know not what to say; but when any one recites a strain of Homer you wake up in a moment, and your soul leaps within you, and you have plenty to say; for not by art or knowledge about Homer do you say what you say, but by divine inspiration and by possession; just as the Corybantian revellers too have a quick perception of that strain only which is appropriated to the God by whom they are possessed, and have plenty of dances and words for that, but take no heed of any

other. And you, Ion, when the name of Homer is mentioned have plenty to say, and have nothing to say of others. You ask, 'Why is this?' The answer is that you praise Homer not by art but by divine inspiration.

SYMPOSIUM

The character of Socrates.

The Symposium is in many ways closely allied to the Phaedrus, and probably belongs to the same period of Plato's life!. Of both, as we have already seen, Love is the theme: and by Love is meant, not the earthly passion, but the aspiration or longing of the soul after the divine.

In the Symposium this spirit is revealed to us embodied in the wonderful personality of Socrates, whom Alcibiades compares to 'the figure of a Satyr which conceals within the fair image of some God.' Moreover, he is the true rhetorician of whom we have heard in the Phaedrus, whose life agrees with his own moral precepts, and who exercises a magical charm over the souls of men. He is not a mystic, and still less an ascetic; he is equally in place at the banquet of Agathon and among the frequenters of the Agora or the Lyceum: he sits as presiding senator at the trial of the Generals after the battle of Arginusae (ep. Apol. 32): he serves willingly in the army, and plays an heroic part at Potidaea and in the rout of Delium. There are some features in such a character which appear strange or even revolting to us at first sight; but we must remember that the Greek ideal of the 'one best man' was not so much that of a saint or religious teacher in our sense, as of one who shared in all respects the life of his fellowcitizens, and in all was superior to them.

. . The 'Banquet' to which the title alludes is supposed to be given by Agathon, the tragic poet, to a party of friends, in honour of the prize which he has just won by his first tragedy. It is agreed by the guests that each in turn shall deliver a speech in honour of Love, and accordingly a number of them pay their encomia to the God.

¹ There is an allusion in the speech of Aristophanes to the destruction of Mantinea by the Lacedaemonians, an event which occurred B. C. 385. At this date Plato was about forty-five years of age.

When Socrates has finished his oration, Alcibiades forces his way into the banquet-hall, drunken, crowned with garlands, and supported by a flute-girl. On learning what is going forward, he also is willing to speak, although he refuses to treat of Love as an abstraction; he prefers rather to utter the praises of Socrates, of whom he has many strange stories to tell.

After his speech is ended fresh revellers appear, and the feast ends in disorder. The 'cooler heads' depart; Socrates remains drinking with Agathon and Aristophanes until dawn; and when he has put them to sleep, one after the other, goes off to his wonted resort at the Lycenm, victorious at the banquet as in every other scene of life.

I. Socrates' fit of abstraction in the Porch.

Steph. Apollodorus. Aristodemus said that he met Socrates fresh from the bath and sandalled; and as the sight of the sandals was unusual, he asked him whither he was going that he had been converted into such a beau:—

To a banquet at Agathon's, he replied, whose invitation to his sacrifice of victory I refused yesterday, fearing a crowd, but promising that I would come to-day instead; and so I have put on my finery, because he is such a fine man. What say you to going with me unasked?

I will do as you bid me, I replied.

Follow then, he said, and let us demolish the proverb:—

'To the feasts of inferior men the good unbidden go;'

instead of which our proverb will run:-

'To the feasts of the good the good unbidden go;'

and this alteration may be supported by the authority of Homer himself, who not only demolishes but literally outrages the proverb. For, after picturing Agamemnon as the most valiant of men, he makes Menelaus, who is but a faint-hearted warrior, come unbidden to the

¹ Iliad ii. 408, and xvii. 588.

banquet of Agamemnon, who is reasting and offering sacrifices, not the better to the worse, but the worse to the better.

I rather fear, Socrates, said Aristodemus, lest this may still be my case; and that, like Menelaus in Homer, I shall be the inferior person, who

'To the feasts of the wise unbidden goes.'

But I shall say that I was bidden of you, and then you will have to make an excuse.

'Two going together,'

he replied, in Homeric fashion, one or other of them may invent an excuse by the way 1.

This was the style of their conversation as they went along. Socrates dropped behind in a fit of abstraction, and desired Aristodemus, who was waiting, to go on before him. When he reached the house of Agathon he found the doors wide open, and a comical thing happened. A servant coming out met him, and led him at once into the banqueting-hall in which the guests were reclining, for the banquet was about to begin. Welcome, Aristodemus, said Agathon, as soon as he appeared—you are just in time to sup with us; if you come on any other matter put it off, and make one of us, as I was looking for you yesterday and meant to have asked you, if I could have found you. But what have you done with Socrates?

I turned round, but Socrates was nowhere to be seen; and I had to explain that he had been with me a moment before, and that I came by his invitation to the supper.

You were quite right in coming, said Agathon; but where is he himself?

175 He was behind me just now, as I entered, he said, and I cannot think what has become of him.

Go and look for him, boy, said Agathon, and bring him in; and do you, Aristodemus, meanwhile take the place by Eryximachus.

The servant then assisted him to wash, and he lay down, and presently another servant came in and reported that our friend Socrates had retired into the portico of the neighbouring house. 'There he is fixed,' said he, 'and when I call to him he will not stir.'

How strange, said Agathon; then you must call him again, and keep calling him.

Let him alone, said my informant; he has a way of stopping anywhere and losing himself without any reason. I believe that he will soon appear; do not therefore disturb him.

Well, if you think so, I will leave him, said Agathon. And then, turning to the servants, he added, 'Let us have supper without waiting for him. Serve up whatever you please, for there is no one to give you orders; hitherto I have never left you to yourselves. But on this occasion imagine that you are our hosts, and that I and the company are your guests; treat us well, and then we shall commend you.' After this, supper was served, but still no Socrates; and during the meal Agathon several times expressed a wish to send for him, but Aristodemus objected; and at last when the feast was about half over—for the fit, as usual, was not of long duration—Socrates entered.

2. His strange appearance and marvellous power of influencing others.

Steph. Alcibiades. And now, my boys, I shall praise Socrates at a figure which will appear to him to be a caricature,

and yet I speak, not to make fun of him, but only for the truth's sake. I say, that he is exactly like the busts of Silenus, which are set up in the statuaries? shops, holding pipes and flutes in their mouths: and they are made to open in the middle, and have images of gods inside them. I say also that he is like Marsvas the satyr. You yourself will not deny, Socrates, that your face is like that of a satyr. Ave, and there is a resemblance in other points too. For example, you are a bully, as I can prove by witnesses, if you will not confess. And are you not a flute-player? That you are, and a performer far more wonderful than Marsyas. He indeed with instruments used to charm the souls of men by the power of his breath, and the players of his music do so still: for the melodies of Olympus' are derived from Marsyas who taught them, and these, whether they are played by a great master or by a miserable flute-girl, have a power which no others have; they alone possess the soul and reveal the wants of those who have need of gods and mysteries, because they are divine. But you produce the same effect with your words only, and do not require the flute: that is the difference between you and him.

When we hear any other speaker, even a very good one, he produces absolutely no effect upon us, or not much, whereas the mere fragments of you and your words, even at second-hand, and however imperfectly repeated, amaze and possess the souls of every man, woman, and child who comes within hearing of them. And if I were not afraid that you would think me hopelessly drunk, I would have sworn as well as spoken to the influence which they have always had and still have over me. For my heart leaps within me more than that of any Corybantian

¹ Cp. Arist. Pol. viii. 5. 16.

reveller, and my eyes rain tears when I hear them. And I observe that many others are affected in the same manner.

I have heard Pericles and other great orators, and I thought that they spoke well, but I never had any similar feeling; my soul was not stirred by them, nor was I angry at the thought of my own slavish state. But this Marsyas has often brought me to such a pass, 216 that I have felt as if I could hardly endure the life which I am leading (this, Socrates, you will admit); and I am conscious that if I did not shut my ears against him, and fly as from the voice of the siren, my fate would be like that of others.—he would transfix me, and I should grow old sitting at his feet. For he makes me confess that I ought not to live as I do, neglecting the wants of my own soul, and busying myself with the concerns of the Athenians: therefore I hold my ears and tear myself away from him. And he is the only person who ever made me ashamed, which you might think not to be in my nature, and there is no one else who does the same. For I know that I cannot answer him or say that I ought not to do as he bids, but when I leave his presence the love of popularity gets the better of me. And therefore I run away and fly from him, and when I see him I am ashamed of what I have confessed to him. Many a time have I wished that he were dead, and yet I know that I should be much more sorry than glad, if he were to die: so that I am at my wits' end.

3. His endurance, eccentricity, and bravery.

Steph. Alcibiades. All this happened before he and I went on A the expedition to Potidaea; there we messed together.

and I had the opportunity of observing his extraordinary power of sustaining fatigue. His endurance was simply 220 marvellous when, being cut off from our supplies, we were compelled to go without food—on such occasions, which often happen in time of war, he was superior not only to me but to everybody; there was no one to be compared to him. Yet at a festival he was the only person who had any real powers of enjoyment; though not willing to drink, he could if compelled beat us all at that,—wonderful to relate! no human being had ever seen Socrates drunk; and his powers, if I am not mistaken, will be tested before long.

His fortitude in enduring cold was also surprising. There was a severe frost, for the winter in that region is really tremendous, and everybody else either remained indoors, or if they went out had on an amazing quantity of clothes, and were well shod, and had their feet swathed in felt and fleeces: in the midst of this, Socrates with his bare feet on the ice and in his ordinary dress marched better than the other soldiers who had shoes, and they looked daggers at him because he seemed to despise them.

I have told you one tale, and now I must tell you another, which is worth hearing.

'Of the doings and sufferings of the enduring man'

while he was on the expedition. One morning he was thinking about something which he could not resolve; he would not give it up, but continued thinking from early dawn until noon—there he stood fixed in thought; and at noon attention was drawn to him, and the rumour ran through the wondering crowd that Socrates had been standing and thinking about something ever since the break of day. At last, in the evening after supper, some Ionians out of curiosity (I should explain

that this was not in winter but in summer), brought out their mats and slept in the open air that they might watch him and see whether he would stand all night. There he stood until the following morning; and with the return of light he offered up a prayer to the sun, and went his way 1.

I will also tell, if you please—and indeed I am bound to tell—of his courage in battle; for who but he saved my life? Now this was the engagement in which I received the prize of valour: for I was wounded and he would not leave me, but he rescued me and my arms; and he ought to have received the prize of valour which the generals wanted to confer on me partly on account of my rank, and I told them so (this, again, Socrates will not impeach or deny), but he was more eager than the generals that I and not he should have the prize.

There was another occasion on which his behaviour 221 was very remarkable—in the flight of the army after the battle of Delium, where he served among the heavyarmed,—I had a better opportunity of seeing him than at Potidaea, for I was myself on horseback, and therefore comparatively out of danger. He and Laches were retreating, for the troops were in flight, and I met them and told them not to be discouraged, and promised to remain with them; and there you might see him, Aristophanes, as you describe 2, just as he is in the streets of Athens, stalking like a pelican, and rolling his eyes, calmly contemplating enemies as well as friends, and making very intelligible to anybody, even from a distance, that whoever attacked him would be likely to meet with a stout resistance; and in this way he and his companion escaped—for this is the sort of man who is never touched in war; those only are

¹ Cp. supra, 175 B.

² Aristoph. Clouds, 362.

pursued who are running away headlong. I particularly observed how superior he was to Laches in presence of mind.

Many are the marvels which I might narrate in praise of Socrates: most of his ways might perhaps be paralleled in another man, but his absolute unlikeness to any human being that is or ever has been is perfectly astonishing. You may imagine Brasidas and others to have been like Achilles; or you may imagine Nestor and Antenor to have been like Pericles; and the same may be said of other famous men, but of this strange being you will never be able to find any likeness, however remote, either among men who now are or who ever have been-other than that which I have already suggested of Silenus and the satyrs; and they represent in a figure not only himself, but his words. For. although I forgot to mention this to you before, his words are like the images of Silenus which open; they are ridiculous when you first hear them; he clothes himself in language that is like the skin of the wanton satyr-for his talk is of pack-asses and smiths and cobblers and curriers, and he is always repeating the same things in the same words, so that any ignorant or inexperienced person might feel disposed to laugh at him; but he who opens the bust and sees what is 222 within will find that they are the only words which have a meaning in them, and also the most divine, abounding in fair images of virtue, and of the widest comprehension, or rather extending to the whole duty of a good and honourable man.

¹ Cp. Gorg 490, 491, 517.

MENO

The Immortality of the Soul proved from the Doctrine of Recollection $(\dot{a}\nu\dot{a}\mu\nu\eta\sigma\iota s)$.

The Meno purports to be a conversation between Socrates and a young Thessalian, Meno, who has been a disciple of the famous Sophist Gorgias. The interest of the dialogue turns mainly on the question, Whether virtue can be taught? This question is soon found to involve another, What is the origin of knowledge? And the answer is that our knowledge is in some degree at least the reminiscence or recollection ($\frac{\partial v}{\partial \mu} \nu \eta \sigma is$) of what we have learned in a previous state of existence. Such a recollection is at first partial and imperfect, but through the association of ideas the mind is enabled to gain more definite conceptions, and to rise by a laborious effort to a true knowledge and intelligence of things.

The Doctrine of Reminiscence is also made a proof of immortality:—if the soul has had existence prior to birth, she may reasonably be supposed to continue in existence after she has left her 'tomb' or 'prison' in the body. It appears to belong to a passing phase of Plato's philosophy; and, except for a slight allusion in the Republic (x. 621 A), is only mentioned in the Phaedrus, Meno, and Phaedo.

Steph. Soc. I will tell you why: I have heard from certain are wise men and women who spoke of things divine that—

Men. What did they say?

Soc. They spoke of a glorious truth, as I conceive.

Men. What was it? and who were they?

Soc. Some of them were priests and priestesses, who had studied how they might be able to give a reason of their profession: there have been poets also, who spoke of these things by inspiration, like Pindar, and many others who were inspired. And they say—mark, now, and see whether their words are true—they say that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time has an end, which is termed dying, and at another time

is born again, but is never destroyed. And the moral is, that a man ought to live always in perfect holiness. 'For in the ninth year Persephone sends the souls of those from whom she has received the penalty of ancient crime back again from beneath into the light of the sun above, and these are they who become noble kings and mighty men and great in wisdom and are called saintly heroes in after ages 1.'

The soul, then, as being immortal, and having been born again many times, and having seen all things that exist, whether in this world or in the world below, has knowledge of them all; and it is no wonder that she should be able to call to remembrance all that she ever knew about virtue, and about everything; for as all nature is akin, and the soul has learned all things, there is no difficulty in her eliciting or as men say learning, out of a single recollection all the rest, if a man is strenuous and does not faint; for all enquiry and all learning is but recollection. And therefore we ought not to listen to this sophistical argument about the impossibility of enquiry: for it will make us idle, and is sweet only to the sluggard; but the other saying will make us active and inquisitive.

APOLOGY,

Or the defence of Socrates

The three Dialogues which treat of the trial and death of Socrates,—the Apology, the Crito, the Phaedo,—are probably to be regarded, not so much as having a claim to historical truth, but rather as containing and developing the view of Socrates' life and character which Plato wishes to impress upon us. They are all marked with the same stamp of genius, and have the same distinction of style which is conspicuous in the other writings of Plato. The figure of Socrates is

Pindar (Fr. 98 Boeckh).

presented to us in them with the rugged outlines somewhat softened and toned down by the haze of Platonic idealism. Yet they also possess a considerable amount of general truth and correctness; and the Apology more especially seems to contain much which is due to Socrates himself.

He may well have thought that the time had come for him to leave the mortal scene. He was already seventy years of age, and the future could have offered little to tempt him. The world had changed around him, and he was too old to change with it. The greatness and glory of Athens were passing away, and a new generation had grown up with whom he was no longer in sympathy, as he had been with their predecessors.

Many of those who had been his hearers, 'even if they could not be called his disciples,' (33 A), had died in infamy and disgrace. Critias and Charmides had been prominent among the Thirty Tyrants: Meno had cruelly betrayed his fellow countrymen in Asia: Alcibiades, once 'the darling of the city,' had brought her to the brink of ruin, and had perished by the hands of hired assassins. Socrates, as Plato indirectly warns us in the Apology, was not to blame for their wickedness; yet a certain shadow was inevitably reflected from their misdeeds upon his character.

And under feelings such as these, we may be allowed to imagine him pleading his cause before his fellow citizens, defending 'in the scorn of consequence' his divine mission, demanding, not mercy, but justice, refusing to degrade himself by bringing his wife and children into court, and when the fatal vote has been given, rising to a still higher pitch of defiance, calmly discussing whether death is an eternal sleep or only the passage to another and better world, and bidding his judges farewell in the firm conviction that no evil can happen to a just man, either in this life or any other.

Socrates will speak in his accustomed manner.

How you, O Athenians, have been affected by my accusers, I cannot tell; but I know that they almost made me forget who I was—so persuasively did they speak; and yet they have hardly uttered a word of truth. But of the many falsehoods told by them, there was one which quite amazed me;—I mean when they said that you should be upon your guard and not allow yourselves to be deceived by the force of my eloquence.

To say this, when they were certain to be detected as soon as I opened my lips and proved myself to be anything but a great speaker, did indeed appear to me most shameless—unless by the force of eloquence they mean the force of truth; for if such is their meaning, I admit that I am eloquent. But in how different a way from theirs! Well, as I was saving, they have scarcely spoken the truth at all; but from me you shall hear the whole truth: not, however, delivered after their manner in a set oration duly ornamented with words and phrases. No, by heaven! but I shall use the words and arguments which occur to me at the moment; for I am confident in the justice of my cause 1: at my time of life I ought not to be appearing before you, O men of Athens, in the character of a juvenile orator-let no one expect it of me.

And I must beg of you to grant me a favour:-If I defend myself in my accustomed manner, and you hear me using the words which I have been in the habit of using in the agora, at the tables of the moneychangers, or anywhere else, I would ask you not to be surprised, and not to interrupt me on this account. For I am more than seventy years of age, and appearing now for the first time in a court of law, I am quite a stranger to the language of the place; and therefore I would have you regard me as if I were 18 really a stranger, whom you would excuse if he spoke in his native tongue, and after the fashion of his country:-Am I making an unfair request of you? Never mind the manner, which may or may not be good; but think only of the truth of my words, and give heed to that: let the speaker speak truly and the judge decide justly.

¹ Or, I am certain that I am right in taking this course.

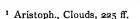
The old accusations against him of the Comic Poets and others.

And first. I have to reply to the older charges and to my first accusers, and then I will go on to the later ones. For of old I have had many accusers, who have accused me falsely to you during many years; and I am more afraid of them than of Anytus and his associates, who are dangerous, too, in their own way. But far more dangerous are the others, who began when you were children, and took possession of your minds with their falsehoods, telling of one Socrates, a wise man, who speculated about the heaven above. and searched into the earth beneath, and made the worse appear the better cause. The disseminators of this tale are the accusers whom I dread; for their hearers are apt to fancy that such enquirers do not believe in the existence of the gods. And they are many, and their charges against me are of ancient date, and they were made by them in the days when you were more impressible than you are now—in childhood, or it may have been in youth—and the cause when heard went by default, for there was none to answer. And hardest of all, I do not know and cannot tell the names of my accusers: unless in the chance case of a Comic poet. All who from envy and malice have persuaded you-some of them having first convinced themselves—all this class of men are most difficult to deal with: for I cannot have them up here, and crossexamine them, and therefore I must simply fight with shadows in my own defence, and argue when there is no one who answers. I will ask you then to assume with me, as I was saying, that my opponents are of two kinds; one recent, the other ancient: and I hope that you will see the propriety of my answering the latter

first, for these accusations you heard long before the others, and much oftener.

Well, then, I must make my defence, and endeavour 19 to clear away in a short time, a slander which has lasted a long time. May I succeed, if to succeed be for my good and yours, or likely to avail me in my cause! The task is not an easy one; I quite understand the nature of it. And so, leaving the event with God, in obedience to the law I will now make my defence.

I will begin at the beginning, and ask what is the accusation which has given rise to the slander of me, and in fact has encouraged Meletus to prefer this charge against me. Well, what do the slanderers say? They shall be my prosecutors, and I will sum up their words in an affidavit: 'Socrates is an evil-doer, anda curious person, who searches into things under the earth and in heaven, and he makes the worse appear the better cause; and he teaches the aforesaid doctrines to others.' Such is the nature of the accusation: it is just what you have yourselves seen in the comedy of Aristophanes 1, who has introduced a man whom he calls Socrates, going about and saving that he walks in air. and talking a deal of nonsense concerning matters of which I do not pretend to know either much or little not that I mean to speak disparagingly of any one who is a student of natural philosophy. I should be very sorry if Meletus could bring so grave a charge against me. But the simple truth is, O Athenians, that I have nothing to do with physical speculations. Very many of those here present are witnesses to the truth of this, and to them I appeal. Speak then, you who have heard me, and tell your neighbours whether any of you



have ever known me hold forth in few words or in many upon such matters.

... You hear their answer. And from what they say of this part of the charge you will be able to judge of the truth of the rest.

As little foundation is there for the report that I am a teacher, and take money; this accusation has no more truth in it than the other. Although, if a man were really able to instruct mankind, to receive money for giving instruction would, in my opinion, be an honour to him. There is Gorgias of Leontium, and Prodicus of Ceos, and Hippias of Elis, who go the round of the cities, and are able to persuade the young men to leave their own citizens by whom they might be 20 taught for nothing, and come to them whom they not only pay, but are thankful if they may be allowed to pay them. There is at this time a Parian philosopher residing in Athens, of whom I have heard; and I came to hear of him in this way:-I came across a man who has spent a world of money on the Sophists, Callias, the son of Hipponicus, and knowing that he had sons, I asked him: 'Callias,' I said, 'if your two sons were foals or calves, there would be no difficulty in finding some one to put over them; we should hire a trainer of horses, or a farmer probably, who would improve and perfect them in their own proper virtue and excellence; but as they are human beings, whom are you thinking of placing over them? Is there any one who understands human and political virtue? You must have thought about the matter, for you have sons; is there any one?' 'There is,' he said. 'Who is he?' said I; 'and of what country? and what does he charge?' 'Evenus the Parian,' he replied; 'he is the man, and his charge is five minae.' Happy is Evenus, I said to myself, if he really has this wisdom, and

teaches at such a moderate charge. Had I the same, I should have been very proud and conceited; but the truth is that I have no knowledge of the kind.

Origin of his reputation for wisdom; his mission to convince mankind of ignorance.

I dare say, Athenians, that some one among you will reply, 'Yes, Socrates, but what is the origin of these accusations which are brought against you; there must have been something strange which you have been doing? All these rumours and this talk about you would never have arisen if you had been like other men: tell us, then, what is the cause of them, for we should be sorry to judge hastily of you.'

Now I regard this as a fair challenge, and I will endeavour to explain to you the reason why I am called wise and have such an evil fame. Please to attend then. And although some of you may think that I am joking, I declare that I will tell you the entire truth. Men of Athens, this reputation of mine has come of a certain sort of wisdom which I possess. If you ask me what kind of wisdom, I reply, wisdom such as may perhaps be attained by man, for to that extent I am inclined to believe that I am wise: whereas the persons of whom I was speaking have a superhuman wisdom, which I may fail to describe, because I have it not myself; and he who says that I have, speaks falsely, and is taking away my character. And here, O men of Athens, I must beg you not to interrupt me, even if I seem to say something extravagant. For the word which I will speak is not mine. I will refer you to a witness who is worthy of credit; that witness shall be the God of Delphi-he will tell you about my wisdom, if I have any, and of what sort it is.

You must have known Chaerephon; he was early a friend of mine, and also a friend of yours, for he shared in the recent exile of the people, and returned with you. Well, Chaerephon, as you know, was very impetuous in all his doings, and he went to Delphi and boldly asked the oracle to tell him whether—as I was saying, I must beg you not to interrupt—he asked the oracle to tell him whether any one was wiser than I was, and the Pythian prophetess answered, that there was no man wiser. Chaerephon is dead himself; but his brother, who is in court, will confirm the truth of what I am saying.

Why do I mention this? Because I am going to explain to you why I have such an evil name. When I heard the answer, I said to myself, What can the god mean? and what is the interpretation of his riddle? for I know that I have no wisdom, small or great. What then can he mean when he says that I am the wisest of men? And yet he is a god, and cannot lie; that would be against his nature. After long consideration, I thought of a method of trying the question. I reflected that if I could only find a man wiser than myself, then I might go to the god with a refutation in my hand. I should say to him, 'Here is a man who is wiser than I am; but you said that I was the wisest.'

Accordingly I went to one who had the reputation of wisdom, and observed him—his name I need not mention; he was a politician whom I selected for examination—and the result was as follows:—When I began to talk with him, I could not help thinking that he was not really wise, although he was thought wise by many, and still wiser by himself; and thereupon I tried to explain to him that he thought himself wise, but was not really wise; and the consequence was that he hated me, and his enmity was shared by several who were present and

heard me. So I left him, saying to myself, as I went away: Well, although I do not suppose that either of us knows anything really beautiful and good, I am better off than he is,—for he knows nothing, and thinks that he knows; I neither know nor think that I know. In this latter particular, then, I seem to have slightly the advantage of him. Then I went to another who had still higher pretensions to wisdom, and my conclusion was exactly the same. Whereupon I made another enemy of him, and of many others besides him.

Then I went to one man after another, being not unconscious of the enmity which I provoked, and I lamented and feared this: but necessity was laid upon me,—the word of God, I thought, ought to be considered first. And I said to myself,—Go I must to all who appear to know, and find out the meaning of the oracle. And I swear to you, Athenians, by the Dog 22 I swear!—for I must tell you the truth—the result of my mission was just this: I found that the men most in repute were all but the most foolish; and that others less esteemed were really wiser and better.

I will tell you the tale of my wanderings and of the 'Herculean' labours, as I may call them, which I endured only to find at last the oracle irrefutable. After the politicians, I went to the poets; tragic, dithyrambic, and all sorts. And there, I said to myself, you will be instantly detected; now you will find out that you are more ignorant than they are. Accordingly, I took them some of the most elaborate passages in their own writings, and asked what was the meaning of them—thinking that they would teach me something. Will you believe me? I am almost ashamed to confess the truth, but I must say that there is hardly a person present who would not have talked better about their

poetry than they did themselves. Then I knew that not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but by a sort of genius and inspiration; they are like diviners or sooth-sayers who also say many fine things, but do not understand the meaning of them. The poets appeared to me to be much in the same case; and I further observed that upon the strength of their poetry they believed themselves to be the wisest of men in other things in which they were not wise. So I departed, conceiving myself to be superior to them for the same reason that I was superior to the politicians.

At last I went to the artisans, for I was conscious that I knew nothing at all, as I may say, and I was sure that they knew many fine things; and here I was not mistaken, for they did know many things of which I was ignorant, and in this they certainly were wiser than I was. But I observed that even the good artisans fell into the same error as the poets;—because they were good workmen they thought that they also knew all sorts of high matters, and this defect in them overshadowed their wisdom; and therefore I asked myself on behalf of the oracle, whether I would like to be as I was, neither having their knowledge nor their ignorance, or like them in both; and I made answer to myself and to the oracle that I was better off as I was.

This inquisition has led to my having many enemies 23 of the worst and most dangerous kind, and has given occasion also to many calumnies. And I am called wise, for my hearers always imagine that I myself possess the wisdom which I find wanting in others: but the truth is, O men of Athens, that God only is wise; and by his answer he intends to show that the wisdom of men is worth little or nothing; he is not speaking of Socrates, he is only using my name by way

of illustration, as if he said, He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing. And so I go about the world, obedient to the god, and search and make enquiry into the wisdom of any one, whether citizen or stranger, who appears to be wise; and if he is not wise, then in vindication of the oracle I show him that he is not wise; and my occupation quite absorbs me, and I have no time to give either to any public matter of interest or to any concern of my own, but I am in utter poverty by reason of my devotion to the god.

There is another thing:—young men of the richer classes, who have not much to do, come about me of their own accord; they like to hear the pretenders examined, and they often imitate me, and proceed to examine others; there are plenty of persons, as they quickly discover, who think that they know something, but really know little or nothing; and then those who are examined by them instead of being angry with themselves are angry with me: This confounded Socrates, they say; this villainous misleader of youth!and then if somebody asks them, Why, what evil does he practise or teach? they do not know, and cannot tell; but in order that they may not appear to be at a loss, they repeat the ready-made charges which are used against all philosophers about teaching things up in the clouds and under the earth, and having no gods, and making the worse appear the better cause; for they do not like to confess that their pretence of knowledge has been detected—which is the truth; and as they are numerous and ambitious and energetic, and are drawn up in battle array and have persuasive tongues, they have filled your ears with their loud and inveterate calumnies.

And this is the reason why my three accusers, Meletus

and Anytus and Lycon, have set upon me; Meletus, who has a quarrel with me on behalf of the poets; ²⁴ Anytus, on behalf of the craftsmen and politicians; Lycon, on behalf of the rhetoricians: and as I said at the beginning, I cannot expect to get rid of such a mass of calumny all in a moment. And this, O men of Athens, is the truth and the whole truth; I have concealed nothing, I have dissembled nothing. And yet, I know that my plainness of speech makes them hate me, and what is their hatred but a proof that I am speaking the truth? Hence has arisen the prejudice against me; and this is the reason of it, as you will find out either in this or in any future enquiry.

Cross-examination of Meletus.

I have said enough in my defence against the first class of my accusers; I turn to the second class. They are headed by Meletus, that good man and true lover of his country, as he calls himself. Against these, too, I must try to make a defence:—Let their affidavit be read: it contains something of this kind: It says that Socrates is a doer of evil, who corrupts the youth; and who does not believe in the gods of the state, but has other new divinities of his own. Such is the charge: and now let us examine the particular counts. He says that I am a doer of evil, and corrupt the youth; but I say, O men of Athens, that Meletus is a doer of evil. in that he pretends to be in earnest when he is only in jest, and is so eager to bring men to trial from a pretended zeal and interest about matters in which he really never had the smallest interest. And the truth of this I will endeavour to prove to you.

Come hither, Meletus, and let me ask a question

of you. You think a great deal about the improvement of youth?

Yes, I do.

Tell the judges, then, who is their improver; for you must know, as you have taken the pains to discover their corrupter, and are citing and accusing me before them. Speak, then, and tell the judges who their improver is.—Observe, Meletus, that you are silent, and have nothing to say. But is not this rather disgraceful, and a very considerable proof of what I was saying, that you have no interest in the matter? Speak up, friend, and tell us who their improver is.

The laws.

But that, my good sir, is not my meaning. I want to know who the person is, who, in the first place, knows the laws.

The judges, Socrates, who are present in court.

What, do you mean to say, Meletus, that they are able to instruct and improve youth?

Certainly they are.

What, all of them, or some only and not others?

By the goddess Herè, that is good news! There are plenty of improvers, then. And what do you say of the 25 audience,—do they improve them?

Yes, they do.

And the senators?

Yes, the senators improve them.

But perhaps the members of the assembly corrupt them?—or do they too improve them?

They improve them.

Then every Athenian improves and elevates them; all with the exception of myself; and I alone am their corrupter? Is that what you affirm?

That is what I stoutly affirm.

I am very unfortunate if you are right. But suppose I ask you a question: How about horses? Does one man do them harm and all the world good? Is not the exact opposite the truth? One man is able to do them good, or at least not many;—the trainer of horses, that is to say, does them good, and others who have to do with them rather injure them? Is not that true, Meletus, of horses, or of any other animals? Most assuredly it is; whether you and Anytus say yes or no. Happy indeed would be the condition of youth if they had one corrupter only, and all the rest of the world were their improvers. But you, Meletus, have sufficiently shown that you never had a thought about the young: your carelessness is seen in your not caring about the very things which you bring against me.

And now, Meletus, I will ask you another question—by Zeus I will: Which is better, to live among bad citizens, or among good ones? Answer, friend, I say; the question is one which may be easily answered. Do not the good do their neighbours good, and the bad do them evil?

Certainly.

And is there any one who would rather be injured than benefited by those who live with him? Answer, my good friend, the law requires you to answer—does any one like to be injured?

Certainly not.

And when you accuse me of corrupting and deteriorating the youth, do you allege that I corrupt them intentionally or unintentionally?

Intentionally, I say.

But you have just admitted that the good do their neighbours good, and the evil do them evil. Now, is that a truth which your superior wisdom has recognized thus early in life, and am I, at my age, in such darkness and ignorance as not to know that if a man with whom I have to live is corrupted by me, I am very likely to be harmed by him; and yet I corrupt him, and intentionally, too-so you say, although neither I nor any other human being is ever likely to be convinced by you. But either I do not corrupt them, or I corrupt 26 them unintentionally; and on either view of the case you lie. If my offence is unintentional, the law has no cognizance of unintentional offences; you ought to have taken me privately, and warned and admonished me; for if I had been better advised, I should have left off doing what I only did unintentionally—no doubt I should; but you would have nothing to say to me and refused to teach me. And now you bring me up in this court, which is a place not of instruction, but of punishment.

It will be very clear to you, Athenians, as I was saying, that Meletus has no care at all, great or small, about the matter. But still I should like to know, Meletus, in what I am affirmed to corrupt the young. I suppose you mean, as I infer from your indictment, that I teach them not to acknowledge the gods which the state acknowledges, but some other new divinities or spiritual agencies in their stead. These are the lessons by which I corrupt the youth, as you say.

Yes, that I say emphatically.

Then, by the gods, Meletus, of whom we are speaking, tell me and the court, in somewhat plainer terms, what you mean! for I do not as yet understand whether you affirm that I teach other men to acknowledge some gods, and therefore that I do believe in gods, and am not an entire atheist—this you do not lay to my charge,—but only you say that they are not the same gods which the city recognizes—the charge is that they are

different gods. Or, do you mean that I am an atheist simply, and a teacher of atheism?

I mean the latter—that you are a complete atheist.

What an extraordinary statement! Why do you think so, Meletus? Do you mean that I do not believe in the godhead of the sun or moon, like other men?

I assure you, judges, that he does not: for he says that the sun is stone, and the moon earth.

Friend Meletus, you think that you are accusing Anaxagoras: and you have but a bad opinion of the judges, if you fancy them illiterate to such a degree as not to know that these doctrines are found in the books of Anaxagoras the Clazomenian, which are full of them. And so, forsooth, the youth are said to be taught them by Socrates, when there are not unfrequently exhibitions of them at the theatre 1 (price of admission one drachma at the most); and they might pay their money, and laugh at Socrates if he pretends to father these extraordinary views. And so, Meletus, you really think that I do not believe in any god?

I swear by Zeus that you believe absolutely in none at all.

Nobody will believe you, Meletus, and I am pretty sure that you do not believe yourself. I cannot help thinking, men of Athens, that Meletus is reckless and impudent, and that he has written this indictment in a spirit of mere wantonness and youthful bravado. ²⁷ Has he not compounded a riddle, thinking to try me? He said to himself:—I shall see whether the wise Socrates will discover my facetious contradiction, or whether I shall be able to deceive him and the rest

¹ Probably in allusion to Aristophanes who caricatured, and to Euripides who borrowed the notions of Anaxagoras, as well as to other dramatic poets.

of them. For he certainly does appear to me to contradict himself in the indictment as much as if he said that Socrates is guilty of not believing in the gods, and yet of believing in them—but this is not like a person who is in earnest.

I should like you, O men of Athens, to join me in examining what I conceive to be his inconsistency; and do you, Meletus, answer. And I must remind the audience of my request that they would not make a disturbance if I speak in my accustomed manner:

Did ever man, Meletus, believe in the existence of human things, and not of human beings?... I wish, men of Athens, that he would answer, and not be always trying to get up an interruption. Did ever any man believe in horsemanship, and not in horses? or in flute-playing, and not in flute-players? No, my friend; I will answer to you and to the court, as you refuse to answer for yourself. There is no man who ever did. But now please to answer the next question: Can a man believe in spiritual and divine agencies, and not in spirits or demigods?

He cannot.

How lucky I am to have extracted that answer, by the assistance of the court! But then you swear in the indictment that I teach and believe in divine or spiritual agencies (new or old, no matter for that); at any rate, I believe in spiritual agencies,—so you say and swear in the affidavit; and yet if I believe in divine beings, how can I help believing in spirits or demigods;—must I not? To be sure I must; and therefore I may assume that your silence gives consent. Now what are spirits or demigods? are they not either gods or the sons of gods?

Certainly they are.

But this is what I call the facetious riddle invented

by you: the demigods or spirits are gods, and you say first that I do not believe in gods, and then again that I do believe in gods; that is, if I believe in demigods. For if the demigods are the illegitimate sons of gods. whether by the nymphs or by any other mothers, of whom they are said to be the sons—what human being will ever believe that there are no gods if they are the sons of gods? You might as well affirm the existence of mules, and deny that of horses and asses. Such nonsense, Meletus, could only have been intended by you to make trial of me. You have put this into the indictment because you had nothing real of which to accuse me. But no one who has a particle of understanding will ever be convinced by you that the same men can believe in divine and superhuman things. 28 and yet not believe that there are gods and demigods and heroes.

He will not alter his course from any fear of death.

I have said enough in answer to the charge of Meletus: any elaborate defence is unnecessary; but I know only too well how many are the enmities which I have incurred, and this is what will be my destruction if I am destroyed;—not Meletus, nor yet Anytus, but the envy and detraction of the world, which has been the death of many good men, and will probably be the death of many more; there is no danger of my being the last of them.

Some one will say: And are you not ashamed, Socrates, of a course of life which is likely to bring you to an untimely end? To him I may fairly answer: There you are mistaken: a man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living or dying; he ought only to consider whether in doing

anything he is doing right or wrong—acting the part of a good man or of a bad. Whereas, upon your view, the heroes who fell at Troy were not good for much, and the son of Thetis above all, who altogether despised danger in comparison with disgrace; and when he was so eager to slay Hector, his goddess mother said to him, that if he avenged his companion Patroclus, and slew Hector, he would die himself-'Fate,' she said, in these or the like words, 'waits for you next after Hector; he, receiving this warning, utterly despised danger and death, and instead of fearing them, feared rather to live in dishonour, and not to avenge his friend. 'Let me die forthwith,' he replies, 'and be avenged of my enemy, rather than abide here by the beaked ships, a laughing-stock and a burden of the earth.' Had Achilles any thought of death and danger? For wherever a man's place is, whether the place which he has chosen or that in which he has been placed by a commander, there he ought to remain in the hour of danger; he should not think of death or of anything but of disgrace. And this, O men of Athens, is a true saying.

Strange, indeed, would be my conduct, O men of Athens, if I who, when I was ordered by the generals whom you chose to command me at Potidaea and Amphipolis and Delium, remained where they placed me, like any other man, facing death—if now, when, as I conceive and imagine, God orders me to fulfil the philosopher's mission of searching into myself and other men, I were to desert my post through fear of 29 death, or any other fear; that would indeed be strange, and I might justly be arraigned in court for denying the existence of the gods, if I disobeyed the oracle because I was afraid of death, fancying that I was wise when I was not wise. For the fear of death is indeed the

pretence of wisdom, and not real wisdom, being a pretence of knowing the unknown; and no one knows whether death, which men in their fear apprehend to be the greatest evil, may not be the greatest good. Is not this ignorance of a disgraceful sort, the ignorance which is the conceit that a man knows what he does not know? And in this respect only I believe myself to differ from men in general, and may perhaps claim to be wiser than they are:—that whereas I know but little of the world below, I do not suppose that I know: but I do know that injustice and disobedience to a better, whether God or man, is evil and dishonourable, and I will never fear or avoid a possible good rather than a certain evil.

And therefore if you let me go now, and are not convinced by Anytus, who said that since I had been prosecuted I must be put to death; (or if not, that I ought never to have been prosecuted at all); and that if I escape now, your sons will all be utterly ruined by listening to my words—if you say to me, Socrates, this time we will not mind Anytus, and you shall be let off, but upon one condition, that you are not to enquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing so again you shall die;-if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply:-Men of Athens, I honour and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy, exhorting any one whom I meet and saying to him after my manner: -You. mv friend, -a citizen of the great and mighty and wise city of Athens,—are you not ashamed of heaping up the greatest amount of money and honour and reputation, and caring so little about wisdom and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, which you never

regard or heed at all? And if the person with whom I am arguing, says: Yes, but I do care; then I do not leave him or let him go at once; but I proceed to interrogate and examine and cross-examine him, and if I think that he has no virtue in him, but only says that he has, I reproach him with undervaluing the greater, and overvaluing the less.

And I shall repeat the same words to every one 30 whom I meet, young and old, citizen and alien, but especially to the citizens, inasmuch as they are my brethren. For know that this is the command of God: and I believe that no greater good has ever happened in the state than my service to the God. For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue comes money and every other good of man, public as well as private. This is my teaching, and if this is the doctrine which corrupts the youth, I am a mischievous person. But if any one says that this is not my teaching, he is speaking an untruth. Wherefore, O men of Athens, I say to you, do as Anytus bids or not as Anytus bids, and either acquit me or not: but whichever you do, understand that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times.

His life has been disinterested and free from reproach.

Men of Athens, do not interrupt, but hear me; there was an understanding between us that you should hear me to the end: I have something more to say, at which you may be inclined to cry out; but I believe that to hear me will be good for you, and therefore

н

98 APOLOGY

I beg that you will not cry out. I would have you know, that if you kill such an one as I am, you will injure yourselves more than you will injure me. Nothing will injure me, not Meletus nor yet Anytus—they cannot, for a bad man is not permitted to injure a better than himself. I do not deny that Anytus may, perhaps, kill him, or drive him into exile, or deprive him of civil rights; and he may imagine, and others may imagine, that he is inflicting a great injury upon him: but there I do not agree. For the evil of doing as he is doing—the evil of unjustly taking away the life of another—is greater far.

And now, Athenians, I am not going to argue for my own sake, as you may think, but for yours, that you may not sin against the God by condemning me, who am his gift to you. For if you kill me you will not easily find a successor to me, who, if I may use such a ludicrous figure of speech, am a sort of gadfly, given to the state by God; and the state is a great and noble steed who is tardy in his motions owing to his very size, and requires to be stirred into life. I am 31 that gadfly which God has attached to the state, and all day long and in all places am always fastening upon you, arousing and persuading and reproaching you. You will not easily find another like me, and therefore I would advise you to spare me. I dare say that you may feel out of temper (like a person who is suddenly awakened from sleep), and you think that you might easily strike me dead as Anytus advises. and then you would sleep on for the remainder of your lives, unless God in his care of you sent you another gadfly.

When I say that I am given to you by God, the proof of my mission is this:—if I had been like other men, I should not have neglected all my own concerns

or patiently seen the neglect of them during all these years, and have been doing yours, coming to you individually like a father or elder brother, exhorting you to regard virtue; such conduct, I say, would be unlike human nature. If I had gained anything, or if my exhortations had been paid, there would have been some sense in my doing so; but now, as you will perceive, not even the impudence of my accusers dares to say that I have ever exacted or sought pay of any one; of that they have no witness. And I have a sufficient witness to the truth of what I say—my poverty.

Some one may wonder why I go about in private giving advice and busying myself with the concerns of others, but do not venture to come forward in public and advise the state. I will tell you why. You have heard me speak at sundry times and in divers places of an oracle or sign which comes to me, and is the divinity which Meletus ridicules in the indictment. This sign. which is a kind of voice, first began to come to me when I was a child; it always forbids but never commands me to do anything which I am going to do. This is what deters me from being a politician. And rightly, as I think. For I am certain, O men of Athens, that if I had engaged in politics, I should have perished long ago, and done no good either to you or to myself. And do not be offended at my telling you the truth: for the truth is, that no man who goes to war with you or any other multitude, honestly striving against the many lawless and unrighteous deeds which are done in a state, will save his life; he who will fight for the 32 right, if he would live even for a brief space, must have a private station and not a public one.

I can give you convincing evidence of what I say, not words only, but what you value far more—actions.

100 APOLOGY

Let me relate to you a passage of my own life which will prove to you that I should never have yielded to injustice from any fear of death, and that 'as I should have refused to yield' I must have died at once. tell you a tale of the courts, not very interesting perhaps, but nevertheless true. The only office of state which I ever held. O men of Athens, was that of senator: the tribe Antiochis, which is my tribe, had the presidency at the trial of the generals who had not taken up the bodies of the slain after the battle of Arginusae; and you proposed to try them in a body, contrary to law, as you all thought afterwards; but at the time I was the only one of the Prytanes who was opposed to the illegality, and I gave my vote against vou: and when the orators threatened to impeach and arrest me, and you called and shouted, I made up my mind that I would run the risk, having law and justice with me, rather than take part in your injustice because I feared imprisonment and death. This happened in the days of the democracy. But when the oligarchy of the Thirty was in power, they sent for me and four others into the rotunda, and bade us bring Leon the Salaminian from Salamis, as they wanted to put him to death. This was a specimen of the sort of commands which they were always giving with the view of implicating as many as possible in their crimes; and then I showed, not in word only but in deed, that, if I may be allowed to use such an expression, I cared not a straw for death, and that my great and only care was lest I should do an unrighteous or unholy thing. For the strong arm of that oppressive power did not frighten me into doing wrong; and when we came out of the rotunda the other four went to Salamis and fetched Leon, but I went quietly home. For which I might have lost my life, had not the power of the Thirty shortly afterwards come to an end. And many will witness to my words.

Now do you really imagine that I could have survived all these years, if I had led a public life, supposing that like a good man I had always maintained the right and had made justice, as I ought, the first thing? No indeed, men of Athens, neither I nor any other man. But I have been always the same 33 in all my actions, public as well as private, and never have I yielded any base compliance to those who are slanderously termed my disciples, or to any other. Not that I have any regular disciples. But if any one likes to come and hear me while I am pursuing my mission, whether he be young or old, he is not excluded. do I converse only with those who pay; but any one, whether he be rich or poor, may ask and answer me and listen to my words: and whether he turns out to be a bad man or a good one, neither result can be justly imputed to me; for I never taught or professed to teach him anything. And if any one says that he has ever learned or heard anything from me in private which all the world has not heard, let me tell you that he is lying.

But I shall be asked, Why do people delight in continually conversing with you? I have told you already, Athenians, the whole truth about this matter: they like to hear the cross-examination of the pretenders to wisdom; there is amusement in it. Now this duty of cross-examining other men has been imposed upon me by God; and has been signified to me by oracles, visions, and in every way in which the will of divine power was ever intimated to any one. This is true, O Athenians; or, if not true, would be soon refuted. If I am or have been corrupting the youth, those of them who are now grown up and have

become sensible that I gave them bad advice in the days of their youth should come forward as accusers, and take their revenge; or if they do not like to come themselves, some of their relatives, fathers, brothers, or other kinsmen, should say what evil their families have suffered at my hands. Now is their time. Many of them I see in the court. There is Crito, who is of the same age and of the same deme with myself, and there is Critobulus his son, whom I also see. Then again there is Lysanias of Sphettus, who is the father of Aeschines—he is present; and also there is Antiphon of Cephisus, who is the father of Epigenes; and there are the brothers of several who have associated with me. There is Nicostratus the son of Theosdotides. and the brother of Theodotus (now Theodotus himself is dead, and therefore he, at any rate, will not seek to stop him); and there is Paralus the son of Demodo-34 cus. who had a brother Theages: and Adeimantus the son of Ariston, whose brother Plato is present; and Aeantodorus, who is the brother of Apollodorus, whom I also see. I might mention a great many others, some of whom Meletus should have produced as witnesses in the course of his speech; and let him still produce them, if he has forgotten-I will make way for him. And let him say, if he has any testimony of the sort which he can produce. Nay, Athenians, the very opposite is the truth. For all these are ready to witness on behalf of the corrupter, of the injurer of their kindred, as Meletus and Anytus call me: not the corrupted youth only—there might have been a motive for that—but their uncorrupted elder relatives. Why should they too support me with their testimony? Why, indeed, except for the sake of truth and justice. and because they know that I am speaking the truth, and that Meletus is a liar.

He will not appeal to the pity of his judges.

Well. Athenians, this and the like of this is all the defence which I have to offer. Yet a word more. Perhaps there may be some one who is offended at me, when he calls to mind how he himself on a similar. or even a less serious occasion, prayed and entreated the judges with many tears, and how he produced his children in court, which was a moving spectacle, together with a host of relations and friends: whereas I, who am probably in danger of my life, will do none of these things. The contrast may occur to his mind, and he may be set against me, and vote in anger because he is displeased at me on this account. Now if there be such a person among you,-mind, I do not say that there is,—to him I may fairly reply: My friend. I am a man, and like other men, a creature of flesh and blood, and not 'of wood or stone,' as Homer says; and I have a family, yes, and sons, O Athenians, three in number, one almost a man, and two others who are still young; and yet I will not bring any of them hither in order to petition you for an acquittal.

And why not? Not from any self-assertion or want of respect for you. Whether I am or am not afraid of death is another question, of which I will not now speak. But, having regard to public opinion, I feel that such conduct would be discreditable to myself, and to you, and to the whole state. One who has reached my years, and who has a name for wisdom, ought not to demean himself. Whether this opinion of me be deserved or not, at any rate the world has decided that Socrates is in some way superior to other men. And 35 if those among you who are said to be superior in

wisdom and courage, and any other virtue, demean themselves in this way, how shameful is their conduct! I have seen men of reputation, when they have been condemned, behaving in the strangest manner: they seemed to fancy that they were going to suffer something dreadful if they died, and that they could be immortal if you only allowed them to live: and I think that such are a dishonour to the state, and that any stranger coming in would have said of them that the most eminent men of Athens, to whom the Athenians themselves give honour and command, are no better than women. And I say that these things ought not to be done by those of us who have a reputation; and if they are done, you ought not to permit them; you ought rather to show that you are far more disposed to condemn the man who gets up a doleful scene and makes the city ridiculous, than him who holds his peace.

But, setting aside the question of public opinion, there seems to be something wrong in asking a favour of a judge, and thus procuring an acquittal, instead of informing and convincing him. For his duty is, not to make a present of justice, but to give judgment; and he has sworn that he will judge according to the laws, and not according to his own good pleasure; and we ought not to encourage you, nor should you allow yourselves to be encouraged, in this habit of perjury—there can be no piety in that. Do not then require me to do what I consider dishonourable and impious and wrong. especially now, when I am being tried for impiety on the indictment of Meletus. For if, O men of Athens. by force of persuasion and entreaty I could overpower your oaths, then I should be teaching you to believe that there are no gods, and in defending should simply convict myself of the charge of not believing in them.

But that is not so—far otherwise. For I do believe that there are gods, and in a sense higher than that in which any of my accusers believe in them. And to you and to God I commit my cause, to be determined by you as is best for you and me.

[He is convicted.]

He proposes as his penalty,—maintenance in the Prytaneum.

There are many reasons why I am not grieved, O men of Athens, at the vote of condemnation. I expected 36 it, and am only surprised that the votes are so nearly equal; for I had thought that the majority against me would have been far larger; but now, had thirty votes gone over to the other side, I should have been acquitted. And I may say, I think, that I have escaped Meletus. I may say more; for without the assistance of Anytus and Lycon, any one may see that he would not have had a fifth part of the votes, as the law requires, in which case he would have incurred a fine of a thousand drachmae.

And so he proposes death as the penalty. And what shall I propose on my part, O men of Athens? Clearly that which is my due. And what is my due? What return shall be made to the man who has never had the wit to be idle during his whole life; but has been careless of what the many care for—wealth, and family interests, and military offices, and speaking in the assembly, and magistracies, and plots, and parties. Reflecting that I was really too honest a man to be a politician and live, I did not go where I could do no good to you or to myself; but where I could do the greatest good privately to every one of you,

thither I went, and sought to persuade every man among you that he must look to himself, and seek virtue and wisdom before he looks to his private interests, and look to the state before he looks to the interests of the state; and that this should be the order which he observes in all his actions. What shall be done to such an one? Doubtless some good thing. O men of Athens, if he has his reward; and the good should be of a kind suitable to him. What would be a reward suitable to a poor man who is your benefactor, and who desires leisure that he may instruct you? There can be no reward so fitting as maintenance in the Prytaneum, O men of Athens, a reward which he deserves far more than the citizen who has won the prize at Olympia in the horse or chariot race, whether the chariots were drawn by two horses or by many. For I am in want, and he has enough; and he only gives you the appearance of happiness, and I give you the reality. And if I am to estimate the penalty fairly. 37 I should say that maintenance in the Prytaneum is the just return.

Perhaps you think that I am braving you in what I am saying now, as in what I said before about the tears and prayers. But this is not so. I speak rather because I am convinced that I never intentionally wronged any one, although I cannot convince you—the time has been too short; if there were a law at Athens, as there is in other cities, that a capital cause should not be decided in one day, then I believe that I should have convinced you. But I cannot in a moment refute great slanders; and, as I am convinced that I never wronged another, I will assuredly not wrong myself. I will not say of myself that I deserve any evil, or propose any penalty. Why should I? Because I am afraid of the penalty of death which Meletus proposes? When I do

not know whether death is a good or an evil, why should I propose a penalty which would certainly be an evil? Shall I say imprisonment? And why should I live in prison, and be the slave of the magistrates of the year-of the Eleven? Or shall the penalty be a fine, and imprisonment until the fine is paid? There is the same objection. I should have to lie in prison, for money I have none, and cannot pay. And if I say exile (and this may possibly be the penalty which you will affix). I must indeed be blinded by the love of life, if I am so irrational as to expect that when you, who are my own citizens, cannot endure my discourses and words, and have found them so grievous and odious that you will have no more of them, others are likely to endure me. No indeed, men of Athens, that is not very likely. And what a life should I lead, at my age, wandering from city to city, ever changing my place of exile, and always being driven out! For I am quite sure that wherever I go, there, as here, the young men will flock to me; and if I drive them away, their elders will drive me out at their request: and if I let them come, their fathers and friends will drive me out for their sakes.

Some one will say: Yes, Socrates, but cannot you hold your tongue, and then you may go into a foreign city, and no one will interfere with you? Now I have great difficulty in making you understand my answer to this. For if I tell you that to do as you say would be a disobedience to the God, and therefore that I cannot hold my tongue, you will not believe that I am serious; and if I say again that daily to discourse about virtue, 38 and of those other things about which you hear me examining myself and others, is the greatest good of man, and that the unexamined life is not worth living, you are still less likely to believe me. Yet I say what

108 APOLOGY

is true, although a thing of which it is hard for me to persuade you. Also, I have never been accustomed to think that I deserve to suffer any harm. Had I money I might have estimated the offence at what I was able to pay, and not have been much the worse. But I have none, and therefore I must ask you to proportion the fine to my means. Well, perhaps I could afford a mina, and therefore I propose that penalty: Plato, Crito, Critobulus, and Apollodorus, my friends here, bid me say thirty minae, and they will be the sureties. Let thirty minae be the penalty; for which sum they will be ample security to you.

[He is condemned to death.]

His last words to his enemies.

Not much time will be gained, O Athenians, in return for the evil name which you will get from the detractors of the city, who will say that you killed Socrates, a wise man; for they will call me wise, even although I am not wise, when they want to reproach you. you had waited a little while, your desire would have been fulfilled in the course of nature. For I am far advanced in years, as you may perceive, and not far from death. I am speaking now not to all of you, but only to those who have condemned me to death. And I have another thing to say to them: You think that I was convicted because I had no words of the sort which would have procured my acquittal-I mean, if I had thought fit to leave nothing undone or unsaid. Not so: the deficiency which led to my conviction was not of words—certainly not. But I had not the boldness or impudence or inclination to address you as you would have liked me to do, weeping and wailing and lamenting, and saying and doing many things which you have

been accustomed to hear from others, and which, as I maintain, are unworthy of me. I thought at the time that I ought not to do anything common or mean when in danger: nor do I now repent of the style of my defence; I would rather die having spoken after my manner, than speak in your manner and live. For neither in war nor yet at law ought I or any man to use every way of escaping death. Often in battle there can 39 be no doubt that if a man will throw away his arms, and fall on his knees before his pursuers, he may escape death; and in other dangers there are other ways of escaping death, if a man is willing to say and do anything.

The difficulty, my friends, is not to avoid death, but to avoid unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death. I am old and move slowly, and the slower runner has overtaken me, and my accusers are keen and quick, and the faster runner, who is unrighteousness, has overtaken them. And now I depart hence condemned by you to suffer the penalty of death,—they too go their ways condemned by the truth to suffer the penalty of villainy and wrong; and I must abide by my award—let them abide by theirs. I suppose that these things may be regarded as fated,—and I think that they are well.

And now, O men who have condemned me, I would fain prophesy to you; for I am about to die, and in the hour of death men are gifted with prophetic power. And I prophesy to you who are my murderers, that immediately after my departure punishment far heavier than you have inflicted on me will surely await you. Me you have killed because you wanted to escape the accuser, and not to give an account of your lives. But that will not be as you suppose: far otherwise. For I say that there will be more accusers

of you than there are now; accusers whom hitherto I have restrained: and as they are younger they will be more inconsiderate with you, and you will be more offended at them. If you think that by killing men you can prevent some one from censuring your evil lives, you are mistaken; that is not a way of escape which is either possible or honourable; the easiest and the noblest way is not to be disabling others, but to be improving yourselves. This is the prophecy which I utter before my departure to the judges who have condemned me.

He comforts his friends by the reflection that death may be a gain to the good man.

Friends, who would have acquitted me, I would like also to talk with you about the thing which has come to pass, while the magistrates are busy, and before I go to the place at which I must die. Stay then a little, for we may as well talk with one another while there 40 is time. You are my friends, and I should like to show you the meaning of this event which has happened to me. O my judges—for you I may truly call judges— I should like to tell you of a wonderful circumstance. Hitherto the divine faculty of which the internal oracle is the source has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error in any matter; and now as you see there has come upon me that which may be thought, and is generally believed to be, the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition, either when I was leaving my house in the morning, or when I was on my way to the court, or while I was speaking, at anything which I was going to say; and yet I have often been stopped in the middle of a speech, but now

in nothing I either said or did touching the matter in hand has the oracle opposed me. What do I take to be the explanation of this silence? I will tell you. It is an intimation that what has happened to me is a good, and that those of us who think that death is an evil are in error. For the customary sign would surely have opposed me had I been going to evil and not to good.

Let us reflect in another way, and we shall see that there is great reason to hope that death is a good; for one of two things—either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness, or, as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of him who is undisturbed even by dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain. For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man, I will not say a private man, but even the great king, will not find many such days or nights, when compared with the others.

Now if death be of such a nature, I say that to die is gain; for eternity is then only a single night. But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead abide, what good, O my friends and judges, can be greater than this? If indeed when the pilgrim arrives in the world below, he is delivered 4¹ from the professors of justice in this world, and finds the true judges who are said to give judgment there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus, and other sons of God who were righteous in their own life, that pilgrimage will be worth making. What

would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus and Musaeus and Hesiod and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I myself, too, shall have a wonderful interest in there meeting and conversing with Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and any other ancient hero who has suffered death through an unjust judgment; and there will be no small pleasure, as I think, in comparing my own sufferings with theirs. Above all, I shall then be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge; as in this world, so also in the next; and I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise, and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great Trojan expedition; or Odysseus, or Sisyphus, or numberless others, men and women too! What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions! In another world they do not put a man to death for asking questions: assuredly not. For besides being happier than we are, they will be immortal, if what is said is true.

Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that the time had arrived when it was better for me to die and be released from trouble; wherefore the oracle gave no sign. For which reason, also, I am not angry with my condemners, or with my accusers; they have done me no harm, although they did not mean to do me any good; and for this I may gently blame them.

Still I have a favour to ask of them. When my sons are grown up, I would ask you, O my friends, to

punish them; and I would have you trouble them, as I have troubled you, if they seem to care about riches, or anything, more than about virtue; or if they pretend to be something when they are really nothing,—then reprove them, as I have reproved you, for not caring about that for which they ought to care, and thinking that they are something when they are really nothing. And if you do this, both I and my sons will 42 have received justice at your hands.

The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways—I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows.

CRITO,

Or Socrates in Prison

In the Crito Socrates appears in a gentler mood than he has shown in the Apology. The end is approaching: the vision has warned him that 'on the third day hence he must depart,' and he is now calmly awaiting death. The arguments and entreaties of his aged friend have no weight with him; for he hears above them the voice of duty bidding him remain at the post where God has stationed him. And Crito himself is at last reluctantly and sorrowfully compelled to acknowledge that Socrates is right, and that 'there is nothing more to be said.'

The little dialogue is an excellent example of Plato's dramatic power and literary skill. The characters of Socrates and Crito are perfectly discriminated; and even the Laws of Athens and their brethren 'the Laws of the other world' seem to pass out of the realm of shadows and assume a living shape before our eyes. The whole scene is conceived, not according to the spirit of modern realism, but, as Greek art required, in a manner which softens and keeps out of sight the less pleasing details. The horrors of the prison are not dwelt upon, or the sufferings of Socrates; these are set in the background, or are only lightly suggested in order to throw into brighter relief the cheerfulness and resignation with which he bears his fate.

Socrates. Why have you come at this hour, Crito? it Steph must be quite early?

37OT 1

114 CRITO

Crito. Yes, certainly.

Soc. What is the exact time?

Cr. The dawn is breaking.

Soc. I wonder that the keeper of the prison would let you in.

Cr. He knows me, because I often come, Socrates; moreover, I have done him a kindness.

Soc. And are you only just arrived?

Cr. No, I came some time ago.

Soc. Then why did you sit and say nothing, instead of at once awakening me?

Cr. I should not have liked myself, Socrates, to be in such great trouble and unrest as you are—indeed I should not: I have been watching with amazement your peaceful slumbers; and for that reason I did not awake you, because I wished to minimize the pain. I have always thought you to be of a happy disposition; but never did I see anything like the easy, tranquil manner in which you bear this calamity.

Soc. Why, Crito, when a man has reached my age he ought not to be repining at the approach of death.

Cr. And yet other old men find themselves in similar misfortunes, and age does not prevent them from repining.

Soc. That is true. But you have not told me why you come at this early hour.

Cr. I come to bring you a message which is sad and painful; not, as I believe, to yourself, but to all of us who are your friends, and saddest of all to me.

Soc. What? Has the ship come from Delos¹, on the arrival of which I am to die?

Cr. No, the ship has not actually arrived, but she will probably be here to-day, as persons who have

¹ Cp. Phaedo 58.

come from Sunium tell me that they left her there; and therefore to-morrow, Socrates, will be the last day of your life.

Soc. Very well, Crito; if such is the will of God, I am willing; but my belief is that there will be a delay of a day.

Cr. Why do you think so?

Soc. I will tell you. I am to die on the day after the arrival of the ship?

Cr. Yes: that is what the authorities say.

Soc. But I do not think that the ship will be here until to-morrow; this I infer from a vision which I had last night, or rather only just now, when you fortunately allowed me to sleep.

Cr. And what was the nature of the vision?

Soc. There appeared to me the likeness of a woman, fair and comely, clothed in bright raiment, who called to me and said: O Socrates,

'The third day hence to fertile Phthia shalt thou go1.'

Cr. What a singular dream, Socrates

Soc. There can be no doubt about the meaning, Crito,

Cr. Yes; the meaning is only too clear. But, oh! my beloved Socrates, let me entreat you once more to take my advice and escape. For if you die I shall not only lose a friend who can never be replaced, but there is another evil: people who do not know you and me will believe that I might have saved you if I had been willing to give money, but that I did not care. Now, can there be a worse disgrace than this—that I should be thought to value money more than the life of a friend? For the many will not be persuaded that I wanted you to escape, and that you refused.

¹ Homer, Il. ix. 363.

T16 CRITO

Soc. But why, my dear Crito, should we care about the opinion of the many? Good men, and they are the only persons who are worth considering, will think of these things truly as they occurred.

Cr. But you see, Socrates, that the opinion of the many must be regarded, for what is now happening shows that they can do the greatest evil to any one who has lost their good opinion.

Soc. I only wish it were so, Crito; and that the many could do the greatest evil; for then they would also be able to do the greatest good—and what a fine thing this would be! But in reality they can do neither; for they cannot make a man either wise or foolish; and whatever they do is the result of chance.

Cr. Well, I will not dispute with you; but please to tell me, Socrates, whether you are not acting out of regard to me and your other friends: are you not afraid that if you escape from prison we may get into trouble with the informers for having stolen you away, 45 and lose either the whole or a great part of our property; or that even a worse evil may happen to us? Now, if you fear on our account, be at ease; for in order to save you, we ought surely to run this, or even a greater risk; be persuaded, then, and do as I say.

Soc. Yes, Crito, that is one fear which you mention, but by no means the only one.

Cr. Fear not—there are persons who are willing to get you out of prison at no great cost; and as for the informers, they are far from being exorbitant in their demands—a little money will satisfy them. My means, which are certainly ample, are at your service, and if you have a scruple about spending all mine, here are strangers who will give you the use of theirs; and one of them, Simmias the Theban, has brought a large sum of money for this very purpose; and Cebes and many

others are prepared to spend their money in helping you to escape. I say, therefore, do not hesitate on our account, and do not say, as you did in the court¹, that you will have a difficulty in knowing what to do with yourself anywhere else. For men will love you in other places to which you may go, and not in Athens only; there are friends of mine in Thessaly, if you like to go to them, who will value and protect you, and no Thessalian will give you any trouble.

Nor can I think that you are at all justified, Socrates, in betraying your own life when you might be saved; in acting thus you are playing into the hands of your enemies, who are hurrying on your destruction. And further I should say that you are deserting your own children; for you might bring them up and educate them; instead of which you go away and leave them, and they will have to take their chance; and if they do not meet with the usual fate of orphans, there will be small thanks to you. No man should bring children into the world who is unwilling to persevere to the end in their nurture and education. But you appear to be choosing the easier part, not the better and manlier, which would have been more becoming in one who professes to care for virtue in all his actions, like vourself.

And indeed, I am ashamed not only of you, but of us who are your friends, when I reflect that the whole business will be attributed entirely to our want of courage. The trial need never have come on, or might have been managed differently; and this last act, or crowning folly, will seem to have occurred through our negligence and cowardice, who might have saved you, 46 if we had been good for anything; and you might have saved yourself, for there was no difficulty at all. See

¹ Cp. Apol. 37 C, D.

118 CRITO

now, Socrates, how sad and discreditable are the consequences, both to us and you. Make up your mind then, or rather have your mind already made up, for the time of deliberation is over, and there is only one thing to be done, which must be done this very night, and if we delay at all will be no longer practicable or possible; I beseech you therefore, Socrates, be persuaded by me, and do as I say.

Soc. Dear Crito, your zeal is invaluable, if a right one; but if wrong, the greater the zeal the greater the danger; and therefore we ought to consider whether I shall or shall not do as you say. For I am and always have been one of those natures who must be guided by reason, whatever the reason may be which upon reflection appears to me to be the best; and now that this chance has befallen me, I cannot repudiate my own words: the principles which I have hitherto honoured and revered I still honour, and unless we can at once find other and better principles, I am certain not to agree with you; no, not even if the power of the multitude could inflict many more imprisonments, confiscations, deaths, frightening us like children with hobgoblin terrors 1.

What will be the fairest way of considering the question? Shall I return to your old argument about the opinions of men?—we were saying that some of them are to be regarded, and others not. Now were we right in maintaining this before I was condemned? And has the argument which was once good now proved to be talk for the sake of talking—mere childish nonsense? That is what I want to consider with your help, Crito:—whether, under my present circumstances, the argument appears to be in any way different or not; and is to be allowed by me or dis-

¹ Cp. Apol. 30 C.

allowed. That argument, which, as I believe, is maintained by many persons of authority, was to the effect, as I was saying, that the opinions of some men are to be regarded, and of other men not to be regarded. Now you, Crito, are not going to die to-47 morrow—at least, there is no human probability of this—and therefore you are disinterested and not liable to be deceived by the circumstances in which you are placed. Tell me then, whether I am right in saying that some opinions, and the opinions of some men only, are to be valued, and that other opinions, and the opinions of other men, are not to be valued. I ask you whether I was right in maintaining this?

Cr. Certainly.

Soc. The good are to be regarded, and not the bad? Cr. Yes.

Soc. And the opinions of the wise are good, and the opinions of the unwise are evil?

Cr. Certainly.

Soc. And what was said about another matter? Is the pupil who devotes himself to the practice of gymnastics supposed to attend to the praise and blame and opinion of every man, or of one man only—his physician or trainer, whoever he may be?

Cr. Of one man only.

Soc. And he ought to fear the censure and welcome the praise of that one only, and not of the many?

Cr. Clearly so.

Soc. And he ought to act and train, and eat and drink in the way which seems good to his single master who has understanding, rather than according to the opinion of all other men put together?

Cr. True.

Soc. And if he disobeys and disregards the opinion and approval of the one, and regards the opinion of

I,20 CRITO

the many who have no understanding, will he not suffer evil?

Cr. Certainly he will.

Soc. And what will the evil be, whither tending and what affecting, in the disobedient person?

Cr. Clearly, affecting the body; that is what is destroyed by the evil.

Soc. Very good; and is not this true, Crito, of other things which we need not separately enumerate? In questions of just and unjust, fair and foul, good and evil, which are the subjects of our present consultation, ought we to follow the opinion of the many and to fear them; or the opinion of the one man who has understanding? ought we not to fear and reverence him more than all the rest of the world: and if we desert him shall we not destroy and injure that principle in us which may be assumed to be improved by justice and deteriorated by injustice;—there is such a principle?

Cr. Certainly there is, Socrates.

Soc. Take a parallel instance:—if, acting under the advice of those who have no understanding, we destroy that which is improved by health and is deteriorated by disease, would life be worth having? And that which has been destroyed is—the body?

Cr. Yes.

Soc. Could we live, having an evil and corrupted body?

Cr. Certainly not.

Soc. And will life be worth having, if that higher part of man be destroyed, which is improved by justice and depraved by injustice? Do we suppose that 48 principle, whatever it may be in man, which has to do with justice and injustice, to be inferior to the body?

Cr. Certainly not.

Soc. More honourable than the body?

Cr. Far more.

Soc. Then, my friend, we must not regard what the many say of us: but what he, the one man who has understanding of just and unjust, will say, and what the truth will say. And therefore you begin in error when you advise that we should regard the opinion of the many about just and unjust, good and evil, honourable and dishonourable.—'Well,' some one will say, 'but the many can kill us.'

Cr. Yes, Socrates; that will clearly be the answer.

Soc. And it is true: but still I find with surprise that the old argument is unshaken as ever. And I should like to know whether I may say the same of another proposition—that not life, but a good life, is to be chiefly valued?

Cr. Yes, that also remains unshaken.

Soc. And a good life is equivalent to a just and honourable one—that holds also?

Cr. Yes, it does.

Soc. From these premisses I proceed to argue the question whether I ought or ought not to try and escape without the consent of the Athenians: and if I am clearly right in escaping, then I will make the attempt; but if not, I will abstain. The other considerations which you mention, of money and loss of character and the duty of educating one's children, are, I fear, only the doctrines of the multitude, who would be as ready to restore people to life, if they were able, as they are to put them to death—and with as little reason. But now, since the argument has thus far prevailed, the only question which remains to be considered is, whether we shall do rightly either in escaping or in suffering others to aid in our escape

122 CRITO

and paying them in money and thanks, or whether in reality we shall not do rightly; and if the latter, then death or any other calamity which may ensue on my remaining here must not be allowed to enter into the calculation.

Cr. I think that you are right, Socrates; how then shall we proceed?

Soc. Let us consider the matter together, and do you either refute me if you can, and I will be convinced; or else cease, my dear friend, from repeating to me that I ought to escape against the wishes of the Athenians: for I highly value your attempts to persuade me to do so, but I may not be persuaded against my own better judgment. And now please 49 to consider my first position, and try how you can best answer me.

Cr. I will.

Soc. Are we to say that we are never intentionally to do wrong, or that in one way we ought and in another way we ought not to do wrong, or is doing wrong always evil and dishonourable, as I was just now saying, and as has been already acknowledged by us? Are all our former admissions which were made within a few days to be thrown away? And have we, at our age, been earnestly discoursing with one another all our life long only to discover that we are no better than children? Or, in spite of the opinion of the many, and in spite of consequences whether better or worse, shall we insist on the truth of what was then said, that injustice is always an evil and dishonour to him who acts unjustly? Shall we say so or not?

Cr. Yes.

Soc. Then we must do no wrong?

Cr. Certainly not.

Soc. Nor when injured injure in return, as the many imagine; for we must injure no one at all 1?

Cr. Clearly not.

Soc. Again, Crito, may we do evil?

Cr. Surely not, Socrates.

Soc. And what of doing evil in return for evil, which is the morality of the many—is that just or not?

Cr. Not just.

Soc. For doing evil to another is the same as injuring him?

Cr. Very true.

Soc. Then we ought not to retaliate or render evil for evil to any one, whatever evil we may have suffered from him. But I would have you consider, Crito, whether you really mean what you are saying. For this opinion has never been held, and never will be held, by any considerable number of persons; and those who are agreed and those who are not agreed upon this point have no common ground, and can only despise one another when they see how widely they differ. Tell me, then, whether you agree with and assent to my first principle, that neither injury nor retaliation nor warding off evil by evil is ever right. And shall that be the premiss of our argument? Or do you decline and dissent from this? For so I have ever thought, and continue to think; but, if you are of another opinion, let me hear what you have to say. If, however, you remain of the same mind as formerly, I will proceed to the next step.

Cr. You may proceed, for I have not changed my mind. Soc. Then I will go on to the next point, which may be put in the form of a question:—Ought a man to do what he admits to be right, or ought he to betray the right?

¹ e. g. cp. Rep. i. 335 E.

124 CRITO

Cr. He ought to do what he thinks right.

Soc. But if this is true, what is the application? In 50 leaving the prison against the will of the Athenians, do I wrong any? or rather do I not wrong those whom I ought least to wrong? Do I not desert the principles which were acknowledged by us to be just—what do you say?

Cr. I cannot tell, Socrates; for I do not know.

Soc. Then consider the matter in this way:—Imagine that I am about to play truant (you may call the proceeding by any name which you like), and the laws and the government come and interrogate me: 'Tell us, Socrates,' they say; 'what are you about? are you not going by an act of yours to overturn us-the laws, and the whole state, as far as in you lies? Do you imagine that a state can subsist and not be overthrown. in which the decisions of law have no power, but are set aside and trampled upon by individuals?' What will be our answer, Crito, to these and the like words? Any one, and especially a rhetorician, will have a good deal to say on behalf of the law which requires a sentence to be carried out. He will argue that this law should not be set aside; and shall we reply, 'Yes; but the state has injured us and given an unjust sentence.' Suppose I say that?

Cr. Very good, Socrates.

Soc. 'And was that our agreement with you?' the law would answer; 'or were you to abide by the sentence of the state?' And if I were to express my astonishment at their words, the law would probably add: 'Answer, Socrates, instead of opening your eyes—you are in the habit of asking and answering questions. Tell us,—What complaint have you to make against us which justifies you in attempting to destroy us and the state? In the first place did we not bring you into

existence? Your father married your mother by our aid and begat you. Say whether you have any objection to urge against those of us who regulate marriage?' None, I should reply. 'Or against those of us who after birth regulate the nurture and education of children, in which you also were trained? Were not the laws, which have the charge of education, right in commanding your father to train you in music and gymnastic?' Right, I should reply.

'Well then, since you were brought into the world and nurtured and educated by us, can you deny in the first place that you are our child and slave, as your fathers were before you? And if this is true you are not on equal terms with us; nor can you think that you have a right to do to us what we are doing to you. Would you have any right to strike or revile or do any other evil to your father or your master, if you had one, because you have been struck or reviled by him. or received some other evil at his hands?—you would not say this? And because we think right to destroy 51 you, do you think that you have any right to destroy us in return, and your country as far as in you lies? Will you, O professor of true virtue, pretend that you are justified in this? Has a philosopher like you failed to discover that our country is more to be valued and higher and holier far than mother or father or any ancestor, and more to be regarded in the eyes of the gods and of men of understanding? also to be soothed. and gently and reverently entreated when angry, even more than a father, and either to be persuaded, or if not persuaded, to be obeyed? And when we are punished by her, whether with imprisonment or stripes. the punishment is to be endured in silence; and if she lead us to wounds or death in battle, thither we follow as is right; neither may any one yield or retreat or leave

126 CRITO

his rank, but whether in battle or in a court of law, or in any other place, he must do what his city and his country order him; or he must change their view of what is just: and if he may do no violence to his father or mother, much less may he do violence to his country.' What answer shall we make to this, Crito? Do the laws speak truly, or do they not?

Cr. I think that they do.

Soc. Then the laws will say: 'Consider, Socrates, if we are speaking truly, that in your present attempt you are going to do us an injury. For, having brought you into the world, and nurtured and educated you, and given you and every other citizen a share in every good which we had to give, we further proclaim to any Athenian by the liberty which we allow him, that if he does not like us when he has become of age and has seen the ways of the city, and made our acquaintance, he may go where he pleases and take his goods with him. None of us laws will forbid him or interfere with him. Any one who does not like us and the city, and who wants to emigrate to a colony or to any other city, may go where he likes, retaining his property. But he who has experience of the manner in which we order justice and administer the state. and still remains, has entered into an implied contract that he will do as we command him. And he who disobeys us is, as we maintain, thrice wrong; first, because in disobeying us he is disobeying his parents; secondly, because we are the authors of his education: thirdly, because he has made an agreement with us 52 that he will duly obey our commands; and he neither obeys them nor convinces us that our commands are unjust; and we do not rudely impose them, but give him the alternative of obeying or convincing us :- that is what we offer, and he does neither.

'These are the sort of accusations to which, as we were saying, you, Socrates, will be exposed if you accomplish your intentions; you, above all other Athenians.' Suppose now I ask, why I rather than anybody else? they will justly retort upon me that I above all other men have acknowledged the agreement. 'There is clear proof,' they will say, 'Socrates, that we and the city were not displeasing to you. Of all Athenians you have been the most constant resident in the city, which, as you never leave, you may be supposed to love 1. For you never went out of the city either to see the games, except once when you went to the Isthmus, or to any other place unless when you were on military service; nor did you travel as other men do. Nor had you any curiosity to know other states or their laws: your affections did not go beyond us and our state; we were your special favourites, and you acquiesced in our government of you; and here in this city you begat your children, which is a proof of your satisfaction. Moreover, you might in the course of the trial, if you had liked, have fixed the penalty at banishment; the state which refuses to let you go now would have let you go then. But you pretended that you preferred death to exile, and that you were not unwilling to die. And now you have forgotten these fine sentiments, and pay no respect to us the laws, of whom you are the destroyer; and are doing what only a miserable slave would do, running away and turning your back upon the compacts and agreements which you made as a citizen. And first of all answer this very question: Are we right in saying that you agreed to be governed according to us in deed, and not in word only? Is

¹ Cp. Phaedr. 230 C.

128 CRITO

that true or not?' How shall we answer, Crito? Must we not assent?

Cr. We cannot help it, Socrates.

Soc. Then will they not say: 'You, Socrates, are breaking the covenants and agreements which you made with us at your leisure, not in any haste or under any compulsion or deception, but after you have had seventy years to think of them, during which time you were at liberty to leave the city, if we were not to your mind, or if our covenants appeared to you to be unfair. You had your choice, and might have gone either to Lacedaemon or Crete, both which states are often praised by you for their good government, or to some other Hellenic or foreign 53 state. Whereas you, above all other Athenians, seemed to be so fond of the state, or, in other words, of us her laws (and who would care about a state which has no laws?), that you never stirred out of her; the halt, the blind, the maimed were not more stationary in her than you were. And now you run away and forsake your agreements. Not so, Socrates, if you will take our advice: do not make vourself ridiculous by escaping out of the city.

'For just consider, if you transgress and err in this sort of way, what good will you do either to yourself or to your friends? That your friends will be driven into exile and deprived of citizenship, or will lose their property, is tolerably certain; and you yourself, if you fly to one of the neighbouring cities, as, for example, Thebes or Megara, both of which are well governed, will come to them as an enemy, Socrates, and their government will be against you, and all patriotic citizens will cast an evil eye upon you as a subverter of the laws, and you will confirm in the minds of the judges the justice of their own

condemnation of you. For he who is a corrupter of the laws is more than likely to be a corrupter of the young and foolish portion of mankind.

'Will you then flee from well-ordered cities and virtuous men? and is existence worth having on these terms? Or will you go to them without shame, and talk to them. Socrates? And what will you say to them? What you say here about virtue and justice and institutions and laws being the best things among men? Would that be decent of you? Surely not. But if you go away from well-governed states to Crito's friends in Thessalv, where there is great disorder and licence, they will be charmed to hear the tale of your escape from prison, set off with ludicrous particulars of the manner in which you were wrapped in a goatskin or some other disguise, and metamorphosed as the manner is of runaways; but will there be no one to remind you that in your old age you were not ashamed to violate the most sacred laws from a miserable desire of a little more life? Perhaps not, if you keep them in a good temper; but if they are out of temper you will hear many degrading things: you will live, but how?—as the flatterer of all men. and the servant of all men; and doing what?—eating and drinking in Thessaly, having gone abroad in order that you may get a dinner. And where will be your fine sentiments about justice and virtue? Say that 54 you wish to live for the sake of your children-you want to bring them up and educate them—will you take them into Thessaly and deprive them of Athenian citizenship? Is this the benefit which you will confer upon them? Or are you under the impression that they will be better cared for and educated here if you are still alive, although absent from them; for your friends will take care of them? Do you fancy

ĸ

130 CRITO

that if you are an inhabitant of Thessaly they will take care of them, and if you are an inhabitant of the other world that they will not take care of them? Nay; but if they who call themselves friends are good for anything, they will—to be sure they will.

Listen, then, Socrates, to us who have brought you up. Think not of life and children first, and of justice afterwards, but of justice first, that you may be justified before the princes of the world below. For neither will you nor any that belong to you be happier or holier or juster in this life, or happier in another, if you do as Crito bids. Now you depart in innocence, a sufferer and not a doer of evil; a victim, not of the laws but of men. But if you go forth, returning evil for evil, and injury for injury, breaking the covenants and agreements which you have made with us, and wronging those whom you ought least of all to wrong, that is to say, yourself, your friends, your country, and us, we shall be angry with you while you live, and our brethren, the laws in the world below, will receive you as an enemy; for they will know that you have done your best to destroy us. Listen, then, to us and not to Crito.'

This, dear Crito, is the voice which I seem to hear murmuring in my ears, like the sound of the flute in the ears of the mystic; that voice, I say, is humming in my ears, and prevents me from hearing any other. And I know that anything more which you may say will be vain. Yet speak, if you have anything to say.

Cr. I have nothing to say, Socrates.

Soc. Leave me then, Crito, to fulfil the will of God, and to follow whither he leads.

PHAEDO,

Or the last day of Socrates' life

1. Socrates in Prison.

We have already seen Socrates pleading in his own defence, and after his condemnation refusing to attempt his escape from prison, and now Plato introduces him, spending the last day of his life in converse with a chosen circle of friends. Most of these appear in other dialogues. Hermocrates is there, that 'unlucky brother' of the rich Callias, who is conspicuous in the Cratylus; Ctesippus and Menexenus, the boy friends of the Lysis; Apollodorus, 'the madman,' with whom we have made acquaintance in the Symposium; the aged Crito and his son Critobulus, whom we have met in the Euthydemus and the Apology; Aeschines, whose name also occurs in the Apology, and who is reported to have composed several dialogues; Antisthenes, the founder of the Cynic school, who is not mentioned elsewhere in the Platonic writings; Epigenes, probably the son of Antiphon of Cephisus (Apol. 33 E). Plato himself is said to have been ill, and Cleombrotus and Aristippus to have been absent in Aegina.

Phaedo, the narrator of the dialogue, although described as the favourite disciple of Socrates, is one of the least known members of the Socratic circle:—according to the very uncertain legend of his life (Diog. Laert. 2. 31', he was a native of Elis. Five others are also present, none of them natives of Athens:—Euclides and Terpsion, from Megara, the former the founder of the Megarian school, the latter only a name to us; and three Thebans, Simmias and Cebes, who bear the chief part in the ensuing discussion, and Phaedondes, another unknown personality.

The story is supposed to be told by Phaedo to Echecrates of Phlius, a small city in Northern Peloponnesus. This spot seems to have been selected by Plato as the place of narration on account of its insignificance and remoteness, which makes the ignorance of Echecrates in regard to the circumstances of Socrates' death intelligible and natural.

Echecrates. Were you yourself, Phaedo, in the prisons Steph. with Socrates on the day when he drank the poison? 57

Phaedo. Yes, Echecrates, I was.

132 PHAEDO

Ech. I should so like to hear about his death. What did he say in his last hours? We were informed that he died by taking poison, but no one knew anything more; for no Phliasian ever goes to Athens now, and it is a long time since any stranger from Athens has found his way hither; so that we had no clear account.

58 Phaed. Did you not hear of the proceedings at the trial?

Ech. Yes; some one told us about the trial, and we could not understand why, having been condemned, he should have been put to death, not at the time, but long afterwards. What was the reason of this?

Phaed. An accident, Echecrates: the stern of the ship which the Athenians send to Delos happened to have been crowned on the day before he was tried.

Ech. What is this ship?

Phaed. It is the ship in which, according to Athenian tradition. Theseus went to Crete when he took with him the fourteen youths, and was the saviour of them and of himself. And they are said to have vowed to Apollo at the time, that if they were saved they would send a yearly mission to Delos. Now this custom still continues, and the whole period of the voyage to and from Delos, beginning when the priest of Apollo crowns the stern of the ship, is a holy season, during which the city is not allowed to be polluted by public executions; and when the vessel is detained by contrary winds, the time spent in going and returning is very considerable. As I was saying, the ship was crowned on the day before the trial, and this was the reason why Socrates lay in prison and was not put to death until long after he was condemned.

Ech. What was the manner of his death, Phaedo? What was said or done? And which of his friends

were with him? Or did the authorities forbid them to be present—so that he had no friends near him when he died?

Phaed. No; there were several of them with him.

Ech. If you have nothing to do, I wish that you would tell me what passed, as exactly as you can.

Phaed. I have nothing at all to do, and will try to gratify your wish. To be reminded of Socrates is always the greatest delight to me, whether I speak myself or hear another speak of him.

Ech. You will have listeners who are of the same mind with you, and I hope that you will be as exact as you can.

Phaed. I had a singular feeling at being in his company. For I could hardly believe that I was present at the death of a friend, and therefore I did not pity him. Echecrates; he died so fearlessly, and his words and bearing were so noble and gracious, that to me he appeared blessed. I thought that in going to the other world he could not be without a divine call, and that 59 he would be happy, if any man ever was, when he arrived there; and therefore I did not pity him as might have seemed natural at such an hour. But I had not the pleasure which I usually feel in philosophical discourse (for philosophy was the theme of which we spoke). I was pleased, but in the pleasure there was also a strange admixture of pain; for I reflected that he was soon to die, and this double feeling was shared by us all; we were laughing and weeping by turns. especially the excitable Apollodorus-you know the sort of man?

Ech. Yes.

Phaed. He was quite beside himself; and I and all of us were greatly moved.

Ech. Who were present?

134 PHAEDO

Phaed. Of native Athenians there were, besides Apollodorus, Critobulus and his father Crito, Hermogenes, Epigenes, Aeschines, Antisthenes; likewise Ctesippus of the deme of Paeania, Menexenus, and some others; Plato, if I am not mistaken, was ill.

Ech. Were there any strangers?

Phaed. Yes, there were; Simmias the Theban, and Cebes, and Phaedondes; Euclid and Terpsion, who came from Megara.

Ech. And was Aristippus there, and Cleombrotus? Phaed. No, they were said to be in Aegina.

Ech. Any one else?

Phaed. I think that these were nearly all.

Ech. Well, and what did you talk about?

Phaed. I will begin at the beginning, and endeavour to repeat the entire conversation. On the previous days we had been in the habit of assembling early in the morning at the court in which the trial took place. and which is not far from the prison. There we used to wait talking with one another until the opening of the doors (for they were not opened very early); then we went in and generally passed the day with Socrates. On the last morning we assembled sooner than usual, having heard on the day before when we quitted the prison in the evening that the sacred ship had come from Delos; and so we arranged to meet very early at the accustomed place. On our arrival the jailer who answered the door, instead of admitting us, came out and told us to stay until he called us. 'For the Eleven,' he said, 'are now with Socrates; they are taking off his chains, and giving orders that he is to die to-day.' He soon returned and said that we might 60 come in. On entering we found Socrates just released from chains, and Xanthippè, whom you know, sitting by him, and holding his child in her arms. When

she saw us she uttered a cry and said, as women will: 'O Socrates, this is the last time that either you will converse with your friends, or they with you.' Socrates turned to Crito and said: 'Crito, let some one take her home.' Some of Crito's people accordingly led her away, crying out and beating herself.

And when she was gone, Socrates, sitting up on the couch, bent and rubbed his leg, saying, as he was rubbing: How singular is the thing called pleasure. and how curiously related to pain, which might be thought to be the opposite of it; for they are never present to a man at the same instant, and yet he who pursues either is generally compelled to take the other; their bodies are two, but they are joined by a single head. And I cannot help thinking that if Aesop had remembered them, he would have made a fable about God trying to reconcile their strife, and how, when he could not, he fastened their heads together; and this is the reason why when one comes the other follows: as I know by my own experience now, when after the pain in my leg which was caused by the chain pleasure appears to succeed.

2. Why the Philosopher is willing to die, although he will not take his own life.

In the passage which follows Plato clears the way for the main subject of the dialogue,—the proof of the immortality of the soul,—by the discussion of a previous question. Socrates affirms that suicide is unlawful, but that the philosopher is anxious and willing to leave the world; and Cebes and Simmias wish to know whether there is not some inconsistency in this. The answer is that a man may not take his own life because he is the property of God, who is the sole Disposer of events. On the other hand, the body is the source of all evil, a mere clog and weight of the soul in her aspirations after Truth and Divine Being, and therefore she is glad and rejoices when the hour of release arrives.

We may remark both here and throughout the Phaedo, as also in some other dialogues, the deep, if not permanent, impression which was made at one period by the doctrines of the Pythagorean school upon Plato's mind. For we can hardly suppose that the historical Socrates was much influenced by the thoughts of other philosophers: he seems to have taught mainly a simple kind of ethics, and not to have ventured into the ideal realms of metaphysical philosophy. How this Pythagorean teaching reached Plato we are unable to say owing to our dearth of authentic information about his life. He appears himself to acknowledge his indebtedness by the reference to Philolaus, the Theban philosopher: while at the same time he betrays a certain degree of dissatisfaction with the Pythagoreans by the significant remark of Cebes and Simmias that 'though they had often heard their master speak about the unlawfulness of suicide, they had never understood him.' (Cp. the somewhat similar tone in which Plato alludes to the Pythagoreans in the Republic, vii, 530 E, 531 B.)

The Pythagorean vein of thought is manifested especially in the representation of the relation between body and soul. Plato not merely speaks of the body as the corrupting element, 'the vesture of decay' in which the soul is enveloped and kept in bondage (cp. Crat. 400 C, Phaedr. 250 C, Gorg. 493 A); but in the myth of the world which he afterwards relates (114 C), he tells us that the reward of the philosopher will be an absolute and eternal separation of soul and body. This apparently goes somewhat beyond his statements in other passages of a similar nature, in which he generally describes the condition of the soul in the future life as a preparation for a return to existence in bodily form (cp. Gorg. 525, Rep. x. 620).

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that Plato in his myths intended to convey more than a poetical or general truth; to use his own language, 'we must be content to attain probability only, and not be surprised if we cannot give notions which are in every way exact and consistent with one another '(Tim. 29). The ascetic or mystic view which regarded matter as associated with evil, and the enclosure of the soul within an earthly body as an impediment to virtue, is here fitly placed in the mouth of the philosopher whom men have rejected and condemned, and who looks forward to rejoining his spiritual kindred in another and more congenial world (84 B).

Steph. Upon this Cebes said: I am glad, Socrates, that you for have mentioned the name of Aesop. For it reminds me of a question which has been asked by many, and

was asked of me only the day before yesterday by Evenus the poet—he will be sure to ask it again, and therefore if you would like me to have an answer ready for him, you may as well tell me what I should say to him:—he wanted to know why you, who never before wrote a line of poetry, now that you are in prison are turning Aesop's fables into verse, and also composing that hymn in honour of Apollo.

Tell him, Cebes, he replied, what is the truth—that I had no idea of rivalling him or his poems; to do so, as I knew, would be no easy task. But I wanted to see whether I could purge away a scruple which I felt about the meaning of certain dreams. In the course of my life I have often had intimations in dreams 'that I should compose music.' The same dream came to me sometimes in one form, and sometimes in another, but always saying the same or nearly the same words: 'Cultivate and make music,' said the dream. And hitherto I had imagined that this was only intended to exhort and encourage me in the study of philosophy, which has been the pursuit 6r of my life, and is the noblest and best of music. The dream was bidding me do what I was already doing, in the same way that the competitor in a race is bidden by the spectators to run when he is already running. But I was not certain of this; for the dream might have meant music in the popular sense of the word, and being under sentence of death, and the festival giving me a respite, I thought that it would be safer for me to satisfy the scruple, and, in obedience to the dream, to compose a few verses before I departed. And first I made a hymn in honour of the god of the festival, and then considering that a poet, if he is really to be a poet, should not only put together words, but should invent stories, and that I have no invention.

I took some fables of Aesop, which I had ready at hand and which I knew—they were the first I came upon—and turned them into verse. Tell this to Evenus, Cebes, and bid him be of good cheer; say that I would have him come after me if he be a wise man, and not tarry; and that to-day I am likely to be going, for the Athenians say that I must.

Simmias said: What a message for such a man! having been a frequent companion of his I should say that, as far as I know him, he will never take your advice unless he is obliged.

Why, said Socrates,—is not Evenus a philosopher? I think that he is, said Simmias.

Then he, or any man who has the spirit of philosophy, will be willing to die; but he will not take his own life, for that is held to be unlawful.

Here he changed his position, and put his legs off the couch on to the ground, and during the rest of the conversation he remained sitting.

Why do you say, enquired Cebes, that a man ought not to take his own life, but that the philosopher will be ready to follow the dying?

Socrates replied: And have you, Cebes and Simmias, who are the disciples of Philolaus, never heard him speak of this?

Yes, but his language was obscure, Socrates.

My words, too, are only an echo; but there is no reason why I should not repeat what I have heard: and indeed, as I am going to another place, it is very meet for me to be thinking and talking of the nature of the pilgrimage which I am about to make. What can I do better in the interval between this and the setting of the sun?

Then tell me, Socrates, why is suicide held to be unlawful? as I have certainly heard Philolaus, about

whom you were just now asking, affirm when he was staying with us at Thebes; and there are others who say the same, although I have never understood what was meant by any of them.

Do not lose heart, replied Socrates, and the day may 62 come when you will understand. I suppose that you wonder why, when other things which are evil may be good at certain times and to certain persons, death is to be the only exception, and why, when a man is better dead, he is not permitted to be his own benefactor, but must wait for the hand of another.

Fery true, said Cebes, laughing gently and speaking in his native Boeotian.

I admit the appearance of inconsistency in what I am saying; but there may not be any real inconsistency after all. There is a doctrine whispered in secret that man is a prisoner who has no right to open the door and run away; this is a great mystery which I do not quite understand. Yet I too believe that the gods are our guardians, and that we men are a possession of theirs. Do you not agree?

Yes, I quite agree, said Cebes.

And if one of your own possessions, an ox or an ass, for example, took the liberty of putting himself out of the way when you had given no intimation of your wish that he should die, would you not be angry with him, and would you not punish him if you could?

Certainly, replied Cebes.

Then, if we look at the matter thus, there may be reason in saying that a man should wait, and not take his own life until God summons him, as he is now summoning me.

Yes, Socrates, said Cebes, there seems to be truth in what you say. And yet how can you reconcile this seemingly true belief that God is our guardian and we his possessions, with the willingness to die which you were just now attributing to the philosopher? That the wisest of men should be willing to leave a service in which they are ruled by the gods who are the best of rulers, is not reasonable; for surely no wise man thinks that when set at liberty he can take better care of himself than the gods take of him. A fool may perhaps think so-he may argue that he had better run away from his master, not considering that his duty is to remain to the end, and not to run away from the good, and that there would be no sense in his running away. The wise man will want to be ever with him who is better than himself. Now this, Socrates, is the reverse of what was just now said; for upon this view the wise man should sorrow and the fool rejoice at passing out of life.

The earnestness of Cebes seemed to please Socrates. Here, said he, turning to us, is a man who is always enquiring, and is not so easily convinced by the first thing which he hears.

And certainly, added Simmias, the objection which he is now making does appear to me to have some force. For what can be the meaning of a truly wise man wanting to fly away and lightly leave a master who is better than himself? And I rather imagine that Cebes is referring to you; he thinks that you are too ready to leave us, and too ready to leave the gods whom you acknowledge to be our good masters.

Yes, replied Socrates; there is reason in what you say. And so you think that I ought to answer your indictment as if I were in a court?

We should like you to do so, said Simmias.

Then I must try to make a more successful defence before you than I did before the judges. For I am quite ready to admit, Simmias and Cebes, that I ought to be grieved at death, if I were not persuaded in the first place that I am going to other gods who are wise and good (of which I am as certain as I can be of any such matters), and secondly (though I am not so sure of this last) to men departed, better than those whom I leave behind; and therefore I do not grieve as I might have done, for I have good hope that there is yet something remaining for the dead, and as has been said of old, some far better thing for the good than for the evil.

But do you mean to take away your thoughts with you, Socrates? said Simmias. Will you not impart them to us?—for they are a benefit in which we too are entitled to share. Moreover, if you succeed in convincing us, that will be an answer to the charge against yourself.

I will do my best, replied Socrates. But you must first let me hear what Crito wants; he has long been wishing to say something to me.

Only this, Socrates, replied Crito:—the attendant who is to give you the poison has been telling me, and he wants me to tell you, that you are not to talk much: talking, he says, increases heat, and this is apt to interfere with the action of the poison; persons who excite themselves are sometimes obliged to take a second or even a third dose.

Then, said Socrates, let him mind his business and be prepared to give the poison twice or even thrice if necessary; that is all.

I knew quite well what you would say, replied Crito; but I was obliged to satisfy him.

Never mind him, he said.

And now, O my judges, I desire to prove to you that the real philosopher has reason to be of good cheer when

he is about to die, and that after death he may hope to 64 obtain the greatest good in the other world. And how this may be, Simmias and Cebes, I will endeavour to explain. For I deem that the true votary of philosophy is likely to be misunderstood by other men; they do not perceive that he is always pursuing death and dying; and if this be so, and he has had the desire of death all his life long, why when his time comes should he repine at that which he has been always pursuing and desiring?

Simmias said laughingly: Though not in a laughing humour, you have made me laugh, Socrates; for I cannot help thinking that the many when they hear your words will say how truly you have described philosophers, and our people at home will likewise say that the life which philosophers desire is in reality death, and that they have found them out to be deserving of the death which they desire.

And they are right, Simmias, in thinking so, with the exception of the words 'they have found them out;' for they have not found out either what is the nature of that death which the true philosopher deserves, or how he deserves or desires death. But enough of them:—let us discuss the matter among ourselves. Do we believe that there is such a thing as death?

To be sure, replied Simmias.

Is it not the separation of soul and body? And to be dead is the completion of this; when the soul exists in herself, and is released from the body and the body is released from the soul, what is this but death?

Just so, he replied.

There is another question, which will probably throw light on our present enquiry if you and I can agree about it:—Ought the philosopher to care about the

pleasures—if they are to be called pleasures—of eating and drinking?

Certainly not, answered Simmias.

And what about the pleasures of love—should he care for them?

By no means.

And will he think much of the other ways of indulging the body, for example, the acquisition of costly raiment, or sandals, or other adornments of the body? Instead of caring about them, does he not rather despise anything more than nature needs? What do you say?

I should say that the true philosopher would despise them.

Would you not say that he is entirely concerned with the soul and not with the body? He would like, as far as he can, to get away from the body and to turn to the soul.

Quite true.

In matters of this sort philosophers, above all other men, may be observed in every sort of way to dissever 65 the soul from the communion of the body.

Very true.

Whereas, Simmias, the rest of the world are of opinion that to him who has no sense of pleasure and no part in bodily pleasure, life is not worth having; and that he who is indifferent about them is as good as dead.

That is also true.

What again shall we say of the actual acquirement of knowledge?—is the body, if invited to share in the enquiry, a hinderer or a helper? I mean to say, have sight and hearing any truth in them? Are they not, as the poets are always telling us, inaccurate witnesses? and yet, if even they are inaccurate and indistinct, what is

to be said of the other senses?—for you will allow that they are the best of them?

Certainly, he replied.

Then when does the soul attain truth?—for in attempting to consider anything in company with the body she is obviously deceived.

True.

Then must not true existence be revealed to her in thought, if at all?

Yes.

And thought is best when the mind is gathered into herself and none of these things trouble her—neither sounds nor sights nor pain nor any pleasure,—when she takes leave of the body, and has as little as possible to do with it, when she has no bodily sense or desire, but is aspiring after true being?

Certainly.

And in this the philosopher dishonours the body; his soul runs away from his body and desires to be alone and by herself?

That is true.

Well, but there is another thing, Simmias: Is there or is there not an absolute justice?

Assuredly there is.

And an absolute beauty and absolute good?

Of course.

But did you ever behold any of them with your eyes? Certainly not.

Or did you ever reach them with any other bodily sense?—and I speak not of these alone, but of absolute greatness, and health, and strength, and of the essence or true nature of everything. Has the reality of them ever been perceived by you through the bodily organs? or rather, is not the nearest approach to the knowledge of their several natures made by him who so orders his

intellectual vision as to have the most exact conception of the essence of each thing which he considers?

Certainly.

And he attains to the purest knowledge of them who goes to each with the mind alone, not introducing or intruding in the act of thought sight or any other sense together with reason, but with the very light of the 66 mind in her own clearness searches into the very truth of each; he who has got rid, as far as he can, of eyes and ears and, so to speak, of the whole body, these being in his opinion distracting elements which when they infect the soul hinder her from acquiring truth and knowledge—who, if not he, is likely to attain to the knowledge of true being?

What you say has a wonderful truth in it, Socrates, replied Simmias.

And when real philosophers consider all these things, will they not be led to make a reflection which they will express in words something like the following? 'Have we not found,' they will say, 'a path of thought which seems to bring us and our argument to the conclusion, that while we are in the body, and while the soul is infected with the evils of the body, our desire will not be satisfied? and our desire is of the truth. For the body is a source of endless trouble to us by reason of the mere requirement of food; and is liable also to diseases which overtake and impede us in the search after true being: it fills us full of loves, and lusts, and fears, and fancies of all kinds, and endless foolery, and in fact, as men say, takes away from us the power of thinking at all.

'Whence come wars, and fightings, and factions? whence but from the body and the lusts of the body? Wars are occasioned by the love of money, and money has to be acquired for the sake and in the service of

L

the body; and by reason of all these impediments we have no time to give to philosophy; and, last and worst of all, even if we are at leisure and betake ourselves to some speculation, the body is always breaking in upon us, causing turmoil and confusion in our enquiries, and so amazing us that we are prevented from seeing the truth. It has been proved to us by experience that if we would have pure knowledge of anything we must be guit of the body—the soul in herself must behold things in themselves: and then we shall attain the wisdom which we desire, and of which we say that we are lovers: not while we live, but after death: for if while in company with the body, the soul cannot have pure knowledge, one of two things follows-either knowledge is not to be attained at all, or, if at all, 67 after death. For then, and not till then, the soul will be parted from the body and exist in herself alone. In this present life, I reckon that we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible intercourse or communion with the body, and are not surfeited with the bodily nature, but keep ourselves pure until the hour when God himself is pleased to release us. And thus having got rid of the foolishness of the body we shall be pure and hold converse with the pure, and know of ourselves the clear light everywhere, which is no other than the light of truth. For the impure are not permitted to approach the pure.'

These are the sort of words, Simmias, which the true lovers of knowledge cannot help saying to one another, and thinking. You would agree; would you not?

Undoubtedly, Socrates.

But, O my friend, if this be true, there is great reason to hope that, going whither I go, when I have come to the end of my journey, I shall attain that which has been the pursuit of my life. And therefore I go on my way rejoicing, and not I only, but every other man who believes that his mind has been made ready and that he is in a manner purified.

Certainly, replied Simmias.

And what is purification but the separation of the soul from the body, as I was saying before; the habit of the soul gathering and collecting herself into herself from all sides out of the body; the dwelling in her own place alone, as in another life, so also in this, as far as she can;—the release of the soul from the chains of the body?

Very true, he said.

And this separation and release of the soul from the body is termed death?

To be sure, he said.

And the true philosophers, and they only, are ever seeking to release the soul. Is not the separation and release of the soul from the body their especial study?

That is true.

And, as I was saying at first, there would be a ridiculous contradiction in men studying to live as nearly as they can in a state of death, and yet repining when it comes upon them.

Clearly.

And the true philosophers, Simmias, are always occupied in the practice of dying, wherefore also to them least of all men is death terrible. Look at the matter thus:—if they have been in every way the enemies of the body, and are wanting to be alone with the soul, when this desire of theirs is granted, how inconsistent would they be if they trembled and repined, instead of rejoicing at their departure to that place where, when they arrive, they hope to gain that which in life they 68 desired—and this was wisdom—and at the same time

to be rid of the company of their enemy. Many a man has been willing to go to the world below animated by the hope of seeing there an earthly love, or wife, or son, and conversing with them. And will he who is a true lover of wisdom, and is strongly persuaded in like manner that only in the world below he can worthily enjoy her, still repine at death? Will he not depart with joy? Surely he will, O my friend, if he be a true philosopher. For he will have a firm conviction that there, and there only, he can find wisdom in her purity. And if this be true, he would be very absurd, as I was saying, if he were afraid of death.

He would indeed, replied Simmias.

And when you see a man who is repining at the approach of death, is not his reluctance a sufficient proof that he is not a lover of wisdom, but a lover of the body, and probably at the same time a lover of either money or power, or both?

Quite so, he replied.

And is not courage, Simmias, a quality which is specially characteristic of the philosopher?

Certainly.

There is temperance again, which even by the vulgar is supposed to consist in the control and regulation of the passions, and in the sense of superiority to them—is not temperance a virtue belonging to those only who despise the body, and who pass their lives in philosophy?

Most assuredly.

For the courage and temperance of other men, if you will consider them, are really a contradiction.

How so?

Well, he said, you are aware that death is regarded by men in general as a great evil.

Very true, he said.

And do not courageous men face death because they are afraid of yet greater evils?

That is quite true.

Then all but the philosophers are courageous only from fear, and because they are afraid; and yet that a man should be courageous from fear, and because he is a coward, is surely a strange thing.

Very true.

And are not the temperate exactly in the same case? They are temperate because they are intemperate—which might seem to be a contradiction, but is nevertheless the sort of thing which happens with this foolish temperance. For there are pleasures which they are afraid of losing; and in their desire to keep them, they abstain from some pleasures, because they are overcome by others; and although to be conquered by pleasure is called by men intemperance, to them the conquest of 69 pleasure consists in being conquered by pleasure. And that is what I mean by saying that, in a sense, they are made temperate through intemperance.

Such appears to be the case.

Yet the exchange of one fear or pleasure or pain for another fear or pleasure or pain, and of the greater for the less, as if they were coins, is not the exchange of virtue. O my blessed Simmias, is there not one true coin for which all things ought to be exchanged?—and that is wisdom; and only in exchange for this, and in company with this, is anything truly bought or sold, whether courage or temperance or justice. And is not all true virtue the companion of wisdom, no matter what fears or pleasures or other similar goods or evils may or may not attend her? But the virtue which is made up of these goods, when they are severed from wisdom and exchanged with one another, is a shadow of virtue only, nor is there any freedom or health or truth in her:

but in the true exchange there is a purging away of all these things, and temperance, and justice, and courage, and wisdom herself are the purgation of them.

The founders of the mysteries would appear to have had a real meaning, and were not talking nonsense when they intimated in a figure long ago that he who passes unsanctified and uninitiated into the world below will lie in a slough, but that he who arrives there after initiation and purification will dwell with the gods. For 'many,' as they say in the mysteries, 'are the thyrsus-bearers, but few are the mystics,'—meaning, as I interpret the words, 'the true philosophers.' In the number of whom, during my whole life, I have been seeking, according to my ability, to find a place;—whether I have sought in a right way or not, and whether I have succeeded or not, I shall truly know in a little while, if God will, when I myself arrive in the other world—such is my belief.

And therefore I maintain that I am right, Simmias and Cebes, in not grieving or repining at parting from you and my masters in this world, for I believe that I shall equally find good masters and friends in another world. But most men do not believe this saying; if then I succeed in convincing you by my defence better than I did the Athenian judges, it will be well.

3. The Description of the Other Life.

THE myth which Socrates relates in the Phaedo possesses many curious and interesting features. Much of it is obscure to us, partly because of the difficulty which such a description of things unspeakable by man naturally presented to Piato, but partly also from our imperfect acquaintance with the Pythagorean and Orphic literature or teaching, to which, as we have seen, he was deeply indebted.

It includes a cosmography or delineation of the universe as well as an account of the terrors and joys of the other world. The former is elaborately worked out in considerable detail, but is probably not intended by Plato to be taken in a serious spirit. He does not wish to teach us new views of geography or to impress upon our minds correct notions of the form of the world; he is seeking rather to give a degree of solidity and credibility to his theories of the future life, and with this object in view he gladly seizes upon the quaint imaginations of some ancient mystic in order to set forth his thoughts upon the remedial nature of punishment and the immortality of the soul.

According to the myth, the world is a parti-coloured sphere, 'like a child's play-ball,' hanging in space. The inhabited portions of the carth are hollows sunk in this sphere, although we imagine that we live on the surface of the globe. The true earth, of which our little patches are poor, decaying copies, is above, and is glorious and beautiful beyond human conception. The different hollows of the lower earth are connected by a vast and complex system of rivers of fire and mud and water,—the Oceanus, Pyriphlegethon, Cocytus (or Styx), and Acheron of the poets,—which flow mostly underground but come here and there to sight. They pour at various points into and out of the central chasm of Tartarus, and draw the air after them by their currents.

The physical phenomena of the world are thus explained by the perpetual flux of these rivers; and they are likewise an important feature in Hades, or the place of punishment. For the souls of those who have not sinned overmuch, and whose virtues too have been of a common-place character, go to the shores of the Acherusian lake, and there they spend a certain time in a kind of purgatory. and then pass into various forms of men and animals, and so are born again into the world. Of greater sinners a few who are adjudged incurable are condemned to stay eternally in Tartarusthis is a favourite notion with Plato, which we shall find recurring in the Gorgias (525 E) and the Republic (x. 615 C):—the criminals whose sins, though great, are not irremediable, remain a year in Tartarus, and are afterwards carried by the rivers as far as the Acherusian lake. Here they are allowed to entreat the forgiveness of their former victims, and if these consent they are released from their pain; if not, they must repeat the same round until forgiveness has been extended to them. In this manner Plato shows how mercy and justice may be combined, and foreshadows the legislation which he would enact in the Laws, where also he attaches the utmost importance to the forgiveness of the homicide by the victim of his violence (ix. 864 foll.).

his journey thither.

Such is the state of the wicked after death. But the righteous, 'the true philosophers or mystics,' after judgement has been pronounced, go at once to 'their pure home,' the upper earth, where they dwell (as has been already said) in perfect bliss and return no more to human life.

Soc. But then, O my friends, if the soul is really im-Steph. 107 C mortal, what care should be taken of her, not only in respect of the portion of time which is called life, but of eternity! And the danger of neglecting her from this point of view does indeed appear to be awful. If death had only been the end of all, the wicked would have had a good bargain in dying, for they would have been happily quit not only of their body, but of their own evil together with their souls. But now, inasmuch as the soul is manifestly immortal, there is no release or salvation from evil except the attainment of the highest virtue and wisdom. For the soul when on her progress to the world below takes nothing with her but nurture and education; and these are said greatly to benefit or greatly to injure the departed, at the very beginning of

For after death, as they say, the genius of each individual, to whom he belonged in life, leads him to a certain place in which the dead are gathered together, whence after judgment has been given they pass into the world below, following the guide, who is appointed to conduct them from this world to the other: and when they have there received their due and remained their time, another guide brings them back again after many revolutions of ages. Now this way to the other world straight path—if that were so no guide would be needed, for no one could miss it; but there are many partings of the road, and windings, as I infer from the rites and sacrifices which are offered to the gods below in

places where three ways meet on earth. The wise and orderly soul follows in the straight path and is conscious of her surroundings; but the soul which desires the body, and which, as I was relating before, has long been fluttering about the lifeless frame and the world of sight, is after many struggles and many sufferings hardly and with violence carried away by her attendant genius; and when she arrives at the place where the other souls are gathered, if she be impure and have done impure deeds, whether foul murders or other crimes which are the brothers of these, and the works of brothers in crime—from that soul every one flees and turns away; no one will be her companion, no one her guide, but alone she wanders in extremity of evil until certain times are fulfilled, and when they are fulfilled. she is borne irresistibly to her own fitting habitation; as every pure and just soul which has passed through life in the company and under the guidance of the gods has also her own proper home.

Now the earth has divers wonderful regions, and is indeed in nature and extent very unlike the notions of geographers, as I believe on the authority of one who shall be nameless.

What do you mean, Socrates? said Simmias. I have myself heard many descriptions of the earth, but I do not know, and I should very much like to know, in which of these you put faith.

And I, Simmias, replied Socrates, if I had the art of Glaucus, would tell you; although I know not that the art of Glaucus could prove the truth of my tale, which I myself should never be able to prove, and even if I could, I fear, Simmias, that my life would come to an end before the argument was completed. I may describe to you, however, the form and regions of the earth according to my conception of them.

That, said Simmias, will be enough.

Well then, he said, my conviction is, that the earth is a round body in the centre of the heavens, and thereso fore has no need of air or of any similar force to be a support, but is kept there and hindered from falling or inclining any way by the equability of the surrounding heaven and by her own equipoise. For that which, being in equipoise, is in the centre of that which is equably diffused, will not incline any way in any degree, but will always remain in the same state and not deviate. And this is my first notion.

Which is surely a correct one, said Simmias.

Also I believe that the earth is very vast, and that we who dwell in the region extending from the river Phasis to the Pillars of Heracles inhabit a small portion only about the sea, like ants or frogs about a marsh, and that there are other inhabitants of many other like places; for everywhere on the face of the earth there are hollows of various forms and sizes, into which the water and the mist and the lower air collect. But the true earth is pure and situated in the pure heaven—there are the stars also; and it is the heaven which is commonly spoken of by us as the ether, and of which our own earth is the sediment gathering in the hollows beneath.

But we who live in these hollows are deceived into the notion that we are dwelling above on the surface of the earth; which is just as if a creature who was at the bottom of the sea were to fancy that he was on the surface of the water, and that the sea was the heaven through which he saw the sun and the other stars, he having never come to the surface by reason of his feebleness and sluggishness, and having never lifted up his head and seen, nor ever heard from one who had seen, how much purer and fairer the world above is than his own. And such is exactly our case: for we are dwelling in a hollow of the earth, and fancy that we are on the surface; and the air we call the heaven, in which we imagine that the stars move. But the fact is, that owing to our feebleness and sluggishness we are prevented from reaching the surface of the air: for if any man could arrive at the exterior limit, or take the wings of a bird and come to the top, then like a fish who puts his head out of the water and sees this world, he would see a world beyond; and, if the nature of man could sustain the sight, he would acknowledge that this other world was the place of the true heaven and the true light and the true earth. For our earth, and the stones, and the entire region which surrounds us, 110 are spoilt and corroded, as in the sea all things are corroded by the brine, neither is there any noble or perfect growth, but caverns only, and sand, and an endless slough of mud; and even the shore is not to be compared to the fairer sights of this world. And still less is this our world to be compared with the other. Of that upper earth which is under the heaven. I can tell you a charming tale, Simmias, which is well worth hearing.

And we, Socrates, replied Simmias, shall be charmed to listen to you.

The tale, my friend, he said, is as follows:—In the first place, the earth, when looked at from above, is in appearance streaked like one of those balls which have leather coverings in twelve pieces, and is decked with various colours, of which the colours used by painters on earth are in a manner samples. But there the whole earth is made up of them, and they are brighter far and clearer than ours; there is a purple of wonderful lustre, also the radiance of gold, and the white which is in the earth is whiter than any chalk or snow. Of

these and other colours the earth is made up, and they are more in number and fairer than the eye of man has ever seen; the very hollows (of which I was speaking) filled with air and water have a colour of their own, and are seen like light gleaming amid the diversity of the other colours, so that the whole presents a single and continuous appearance of variety in unity.

And in this fair region everything that grows—trees. and flowers, and fruits-are in a like degree fairer than any here: and there are hills, having stones in them in a like degree smoother, and more transparent, and fairer in colour than our highly-valued emeralds and sardonyxes and jaspers, and other gems, which are but minute fragments of them: for there all the stones are like our precious stones, and fairer still'. The reason is, that they are pure, and not, like our precious stones, infected or corroded by the corrupt briny elements which coagulate among us, and which breed foulness and disease both in earth and stones, as well as in animals and plants. They are the jewels of the upper 111 earth, which also shines with gold and silver and the like, and they are set in the light of day and are large and abundant and in all places, making the earth a sight to gladden the beholder's eye. And there are animals and men, some in a middle region, others dwelling about the air as we dwell about the sea; others in islands which the air flows round, near the continent: and in a word, the air is used by them as the water and the sea are by us, and the ether is to them what the air is to us.

Moreover, the temperament of their seasons is such that they have no disease, and live much longer than we do, and have sight and hearing and smell, and all the other senses, in far greater perfection, in the same

¹ Cp. Rev., esp. c. xxi. v. 18 ff.

proportion that air is purer than water or the ether than air. Also they have temples and sacred places in which the gods really dwell, and they hear their voices and receive their answers, and are conscious of them and hold converse with them; and they see the sun, moon, and stars as they truly are, and their other blessedness is of a piece with this.

Such is the nature of the whole earth, and of the things which are around the earth; and there are divers regions in the hollows on the face of the globe everywhere, some of them deeper and more extended than that which we inhabit, others deeper but with a narrower opening than ours, and some are shallower and also wider. All have numerous perforations, and there are passages broad and narrow in the interior of the earth, connecting them with one another; and there flows out of and into them, as into basins, a vast tide of water, and huge subterranean streams of perennial rivers, and springs hot and cold, and a great fire, and great rivers of fire, and streams of liquid mud, thin or thick (like the rivers of mud in Sicily, and the lava streams which follow them), and the regions about which they happen to flow are filled up with them. And there is a swinging or see-saw in the interior of the earth which moves all this up and down, and is due to the following cause: There is a chasm which is the vastest of them all, and pierces right through the whole earth; this is 112 that chasm which Homer describes in the words,—

'Far off, where is the inmost depth beneath the earth';

and which he in other places, and many other poets, have called Tartarus. And the see-saw is caused by the streams flowing into and out of this chasm, and they each have the nature of the soil through which they flow.

And the reason why the streams are always flowing in and out, is that the watery element has no bed or bottom, but is swinging and surging up and down, and the surrounding wind and air do the same: they follow the water up and down, hither and thither, over the earth—just as in the act of respiration the air is always in process of inhalation and exhalation;—and the wind swinging with the water in and out produces fearful and irresistible blasts; when the waters retire with a rush into the lower parts of the earth, as they are called, they flow through the earth in those regions, and fill them up like water raised by a pump, and then when they leave those regions and rush back hither. they again fill the hollows here, and when these are filled, flow through subterranean channels and find their way to their several places, forming seas, and lakes, and rivers, and springs. Thence they again enter the earth, some of them making a long circuit into many lands, others going to a few places and not so distant; and again fall into Tartarus, some at a point a good deal lower than that at which they rose, and others not much lower, but all in some degree lower than the point from which they came. And some burst forth again on the opposite side, and some on the same side, and some wind round the earth with one or many folds like the coils of a serpent, and descend as far as they can, but always return and fall into the chasm. The rivers flowing in either direction can descend only to the centre and no further, for opposite to the rivers is a precipice.

Now these rivers are many, and mighty, and diverse, and there are four principal ones, of which the greatest and outermost is that called Occanus, which flows round the earth in a circle; and in the opposite direction flows Acheron, which passes under the earth

through desert places into the Acherusian lake: this 113 is the lake to the shores of which the souls of the many go when they are dead, and after waiting an appointed time, which is to some a longer and to some a shorter time, they are sent back to be born again as animals. The third river passes out between the two, and near the place of outlet pours into a vast region of fire, and forms a lake larger than the Mediterranean Sea, boiling with water and mud; and proceeding muddy and turbid, and winding about the earth, comes, among other places, to the extremities of the Acherusian lake, but mingles not with the waters of the lake, and after making many coils about the earth plunges into Tartarus at a deeper level. This is that Pyriphlegethon, as the stream is called, which throws up jets of fire in different parts of the earth. The fourth river goes out on the opposite side, and falls first of all into a wild and savage region, which is all of a dark blue colour, like lapis lazuli; and this is that river which is called the Stygian river, and falls into and forms the Lake Styx. and after falling into the lake and receiving strange powers in the waters, passes under the earth, winding round in the opposite direction, and comes near the Acherusian lake from the opposite side to Pyriphlegethon. And the water of this river too mingles with no other. but flows round in a circle and falls into Tartarus over against Pyriphlegethon; and the name of the river, as the poets say, is Cocytus.

Such is the nature of the other world; and when the dead arrive at the place to which the genius of each severally guides them, first of all, they have sentence passed upon them, as they have lived well and piously or not. And those who appear to have lived neither well nor ill, go to the river Acheron, and embarking in any vessels which they may find, are carried in them to

the lake, and there they dwell and are purified of their evil deeds, and having suffered the penalty of the wrongs which they have done to others, they are absolved, and receive the rewards of their good deeds, each of them according to his deserts. But those who appear to be incurable by reason of the greatness of their crimes—who have committed many and terrible deeds of sacrilege, murders foul and violent, or the like—such are hurled into Tartarus which is their suitable destiny, and they never come out.

Those again who have committed crimes, which, although great, are not irremediable—who in a moment of anger, for example, have done some violence to a father or a mother, and have repented for the remainder 114 of their lives, or who have taken the life of another under the like extenuating circumstances—these are plunged into Tartarus, the pains of which they are compelled to undergo for a year, but at the end of the year the wave casts them forth-mere homicides by way of Cocytus, parricides and matricides by Pyriphlegethon—and they are borne to the Acherusian lake. and there they lift up their voices and call upon the victims whom they have slain or wronged, to have pity on them, and to be kind to them, and let them come out into the lake. And if they prevail, then they come forth and cease from their troubles; but if not. they are carried back again into Tartarus and from thence into the rivers unceasingly, until they obtain mercy from those whom they have wronged: for that is the sentence inflicted upon them by their judges.

Those too who have been pre-eminent for holiness of life are released from this earthly prison, and go to their pure home which is above, and dwell in the purer earth; and of these, such as have duly purified themselves with philosophy live henceforth altogether without

the body, in mansions fairer still, which may not be described, and of which the time would fail me to tell.

Wherefore, Simmias, seeing all these things, what ought not we to do that we may obtain virtue and wisdom in this life? Fair is the prize, and the hope great!

A man of sense ought not to say, nor will I be very confident, that the description which I have given of the soul and her mansions is exactly true. But I do say that, inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal. he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily. that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these, which is the reason why I lengthen out the tale.

Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who having cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him and working harm rather than good, has sought after the pleasures of knowledge; and has arrayed the soul, not in some foreign attire, but in her own proper jewels, temperance, and justice, and courage, and nobility, and truth-in 115 these adorned she is ready to go on her journey to the world below, when her hour comes, You, Simmias and Cebes, and all other men, will depart at some time or other. Me already, as a tragic poet would say, the voice of fate calls. Soon I must drink the poison; and I think that I had better repair to the bath first, in order that the women may not have the trouble of washing my body after I am dead.

4. The Death of Socrates.

WE have now come to the last hour in the life of Socrates. when he drinks the hemlock in the prison at the bidding of the magistrates and people of the city of Athens. Nothing is wanting which can add to the pathos and impressiveness of the scene. It

M

VOL. I.

is stamped ineffaceably upon our minds, like the ideas of history which we imbibe from the plays of Shakespeare:—so must the event have happened, we say to ourselves; and only by an effort can we realize the possibility that much of what moves us so strongly may be due solely to the imaginative power of a great writer.

Neither should it be forgotten that we have no means of knowing precisely at what period of Plato's life the Phaedo was composed. We naturally read it in connection with the Apology and Crito, and regard the three writings as a continuous series. Yet, if we may judge by internal evidence—and we have no other—the Phaedo belongs to a later date than the other two works. It is less simple and less purely Socratic; for the Doctrine of Ideas, which scarcely appears in the undoubtedly earlier works of Plato, and was quite unknown to the historical Socrates, here forms the principal support of the argument. But if we are therefore warranted in thinking that a not inconsiderable interval elapsed between the death of Socrates and the composition of the Phaedo, we may also have reason to suppose that the dialogue has a lighter claim to historical veracity than the Apology or the Crito.

Whether, however, all the incidents which are related in the Phaedo really occurred or not, we may well believe that Plato throughout the dialogue has chiefly in view the proof of the immortality of the soul, which he desires to confirm and strengthen in every possible way. He has already narrated the myth with this object, and he now proceeds still more solemnly to emphasize the lesson by the story of the death of Socrates. The arguments which have been advanced are not very convincing, as Plato himself seems to admit, and the myth is no more than a poetical fancy. But the example of Socrates, who is animated and supported in his last moments by the expectation of a life to come, appeals to us with a power which no argument can possess. For the hope of immortality is a deeply rooted instinct or an inward revelation to which the better part of the world has ever clung, rather than an article of belief which can be demonstrated by the processes of logic or placed wholly beyond the reach of doubt.

Steph. When he had done speaking, Crito said: And have you any commands for us, Socrates—anything to say about your children, or any other matter in which we can serve you?

Nothing particular, Crito, he replied: only, as I have always told you take care of yourselves that is a

service which you may be ever rendering to me and mine and to all of us, whether you promise to do so or not. But if you have no thought for yourselves, and care not to walk according to the rule which I have prescribed for you, not now for the first time, however much you may profess or promise at the moment, it will be of no avail.

We will do our best, said Crito: And in what way shall we bury you?

In any way that you like; but you must get hold of me, and take care that I do not run away from you. Then he turned to us, and added with a smile:-I cannot make Crito believe that I am the same Socrates who have been talking and conducting the argument; he fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see, a dead body—and he asks. How shall he bury me? And though I have spoken many words in the endeavour. to show that when I have drunk the poison I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed,—these words of mine, with which I was comforting you and myself, have had, as I perceive, no effect upon Crito. And therefore I want you to be surety for me to him now, as at the trial he was surety to the judges for me: but let the promise be of another sort: for he was surety for me to the judges that I would remain, and you must be my surety to him that I shall not remain, but go away and depart; and then he will suffer less at my death, and not be grieved when he sees my body being burned or buried. I would not have him sorrow at my hard lot. or say at the burial, Thus we lay out Socrates, or, Thus we follow him to the grave or bury him; for false words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil. Be of good cheer then, my dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, and do with 116 that whatever is usual, and what you think best.

When he had spoken these words, he arose and went into a chamber to bathe; Crito followed him and told us to wait. So we remained behind, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow; he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath his children were brought to him—(he had two young sons and an elder one); and the women of his family also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito; then he dismissed them and returned to us.

Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out, he sat down with us again after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the Eleven, entered and stood by him, saying:—To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of other men, who rage and swear at me, when, in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison—indeed, I am sure that you will not be angry with me; for others, as you are aware, and not I, are to blame. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be—you know my errand. Then bursting into tears he turned away and went out.

Socrates looked at him and said: I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid. Then turning to us, he said, How charming the man is: since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good to me as could be, and now see how generously he sorrows on my account. We must do as he says, Crito; and therefore let the cup be

brought, if the poison is prepared: if not, let the attendant prepare some.

Yet, said Crito, the sun is still upon the hill-tops, and I know that many a one has taken the draught late, and after the announcement has been made to him, he has eaten and drunk, and enjoyed the society of his beloved; do not hurry—there is time enough.

Socrates said: Yes, Crito, and they of whom you speak are right in so acting, for they think that they will be gainers by the delay; but I am right in not following their example, for I do not think that I should gain anything by drinking the poison a little later; I should 1177 only be ridiculous in my own eyes for sparing and saving a life which is already forfeit. Please then to do as I say, and not to refuse me.

Crito made a sign to the servant, who was standing by; and he went out, and having been absent for some time, returned with the jailer carrying the cup of poison. Socrates said: You, my good friend, who are experienced in these matters, shall give me directions how I am to proceed. The man answered: You have only to walk about until your legs are heavy, and then to lie down, and the poison will act. At the same time he handed the cup to Socrates, who in the easiest and gentlest manner, without the least fear or change of colour or feature, looking at the man with all his eyes. Echecrates, as his manner was, took the cup and said: What do you say about making a libation out of this cup to any god? May I, or not? The man answered: We only prepare, Socrates, just so much as we deem enough. I understand, he said: but I may and must ask the gods to prosper my journey from this to the other world-even so-and so be it according to my prayer. Then raising the cup to his lips, quite readily and cheerfully he drank off the poison.

And hitherto most of us had been able to control our sorrow; but now when we saw him drinking, and saw too that he had finished the draught, we could no longer forbear, and in spite of myself my own tears were flowing fast: so that I covered my face and wept, not for him, but at the thought of my own calamity in having to part from such a friend. Nor was I the first; for Crito, when he found himself unable to restrain his tears, had got up, and I followed; and at that moment, Apollodorus, who had been weeping all the time, broke out in a loud and passionate cry which made cowards of us all. Socrates alone retained his calmness: What is this strange outcry? he said. I sent away the women mainly in order that they might not misbehave in this way, for I have been told that a man should die in peace. Be quiet then, and have patience.

When we heard his words we were ashamed, and refrained our tears: and he walked about until, as he said, his legs began to fail, and then he lay on his back, according to the directions, and the man who gave him the poison now and then looked at his feet and legs; and after a while he pressed his foot hard, and asked him 118 if he could feel; and he said, No; and then his leg, and so upwards and upwards, and showed us that he was cold and stiff. And he felt them himself, and said: When the poison reaches the heart, that will be the end. He was beginning to grow cold about the groin, when he uncovered his face, for he had covered himself up, and said—they were his last words—he said: Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius; will you remember to pay the debt? The debt shall be paid, said Crito; is there anything else? There was no answer to this question; but in a minute or two a movement was heard, and the attendants uncovered him; his eyes were set, and Crito closed his eyes and mouth.

Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend; concerning whom I may truly say, that of all the men of his time whom I have known, he was the wisest and justest and best.

GORGIAS

I. The good man desires, not a long, but a virtuous life.

THE Gorgias, like several other writings of Plato, is not easily summarized under a single head, although numerous commentators and editors have attempted the task. We shall, perhaps, not be far wrong if we say that the dialogue is intended to set forth the final victory of truth and righteousness over falsehood and injustice; but we have to travel by many winding roads in order to reach our goal. There is a true rhetoric which convinces us of sin, and a false rhetoric which places evil in a specious light, and 'makes the worse appear the better cause.' Again, there is a true art of politics which considers only the welfare of the state, and a bastard kind which flatters the multitude and brings ruin on the city. Lastly, there is the contrast between the just man who is happy 'even though he suffer undeservedly,' and the wicked, who, if they escape punishment in this life, receive fitting chastisement in another world. The lesson or 'moral' is pointed by a myth which shows how futile are the falsehoods and conventions of human life, when the soul comes to appear before the judgmentseat of the sons of Zeus in Hades.

The dialogue probably belongs to a middle period of the Platonic writings. It seems to be later than the Phaedrus, which also treats of Rhetoric true and false, but is written in a lighter and more playful vein; it can scarcely come after the Republic, in which the triumph of justice again furnishes a guiding principle of the whole discourse. Thus it may be described as a resumption of the one, and a preparation for the other. A further reason for assigning the dialogue to a later rather than to an earlier date is to be found in the appearance of that austerity or bitterness of tone which marks several of Plato's most important works, e.g the Statesman and the Laws, and which we may indulge our fancy by attributing in a measure to the circumstances of his life.

The characters of the dialogue, besides the familiar figure of

Socrates, are Gorgias, the famous Sophist; Polus, his young disciple, the same whose 'Licymnian diction' is ridiculed in the Phaedrus (267 C), and Callicles, a wealthy Athenian and friend of Gorgias. not otherwise known to us. Chaerophon, the 'excitable' admirer of Socrates (Charm, 153 B; Apol. 21 A), also appears in the prologue, although he does not share in the subsequent discussion. Gorgias himself plays a somewhat subordinate part; and neither he nor his confident and forward pupil, Polus, can offer any substantial resistance to the dialectical prowess of Socrates, that 'hero of argument' (Theaet, 160). Callicles, coming to the rescue of Polus, maintains against Socrates 'the law of nature,' or the principle that 'might is right': he, however, is in turn vanquished, and grudgingly admits 'that he is almost convinced' of the truth of his opponent's words. This is the most serious portion of the dialogue; but the earnestness is slightly veiled as usual by the irony of Socrates, which really helps to heighten the effect.

... The connexion of the passage which is here quoted with what immediately precedes is as follows:—Callicles has been asserting that virtue is a mere sham or convention, and that the unjust man is happy so long as he prospers in his career of crime. Socrates protests against such an impious doctrine, and declares that the unjust is only happy when he is punished for his wickedness. Callicles says that this is absurd; for will not the tyrant be able to put the just man to death or treat him in any cruel manner which he pleases? The answer according to Socrates is that life in itself is of little value; the just man simply desires a good life, whether short or long, happy or miserable. He then proceeds in his half-jesting manner to support his thesis by humorous instances of life-saving arts which are held in little esteem among mankind.

Steph. Callicles. You always contrive somehow or other,

511 Socrates, to invert everything: do you not know that
he who imitates the tyrant will, if he has a mind, kill
him who does not imitate him and take away his goods?

Soc. Excellent Callicles, I am not deaf, and I have heard that a great many times from you and from Polus and from nearly every man in the city, but I wish that you would hear me too. I dare say that he will kill him if he has a mind—the bad man will kill the good and true.

10

Cal. And is not that just the provoking thing?

Soc. Nay, not to a man of sense, as the argument shows: do you think that all our cares should be directed to prolonging life to the uttermost, and to the study of those arts which secure us from danger always; like that art of rhetoric which saves men in courts of law, and which you advise me to cultivate?

Cal. Yes, truly, and very good advice too.

Soc. Well, my friend, but what do you think of swimming; is that an art of any great pretensions?

Cal. No, indeed.

Soc. And yet surely swimming saves a man from death, and there are occasions on which he must know how to swim. And if you despise the swimmers, I will tell vou of another and greater art, the art of the pilot, who not only saves the souls of men, but also their bodies and properties from the extremity of danger. just like rhetoric. Yet his art is modest and unpresuming: it has no airs or pretences of doing anything extraordinary, and, in return for the same salvation which is given by the pleader, demands only two obols, if he brings us from Aegina to Athens, or for the longer voyage from Pontus or Egypt, at the utmost two drachmae, when he has saved, as I was just now saying, the passenger and his wife and children and goods, and safely disembarked them at the Piraeus,—this is the payment which he asks in return for so great a boon; and he who is the master of the art, and has done all this. gets out and walks about on the sea-shore by his ship in an unassuming way. For he is able to reflect and is aware that he cannot tell which of his fellowpassengers he has benefited, and which of them he has injured in not allowing them to be drowned. He knows that they are just the same when he has disembarked them as when they embarked, and not a whit better 512 either in their bodies or in their souls; and he considers that if a man who is afflicted by great and incurable bodily diseases is only to be pitied for having escaped, and is in no way benefited by him in having been saved from drowning, much less he who has great and incurable diseases, not of the body, but of the soul, which is the more valuable part of him; neither is life worth having nor of any profit to the bad man, whether he be delivered from the sea, or the law-courts, or any other devourer;—and so he reflects that such a one had better not live, for he cannot live well.

And this is the reason why the pilot, although he is our saviour, is not usually conceited, any more than the engineer, who is not at all behind either the general, or the pilot, or any one else, in his saving power, for he sometimes saves whole cities. Is there any comparison between him and the pleader? And if he were to talk, Callicles, in your grandiose style, he would bury you under a mountain of words, declaring and insisting that we ought all of us to be engine-makers, and that no other profession is worth thinking about; he would have plenty to say. Nevertheless you despise him and his art, and sneeringly call him an engine-maker, and you will not allow your daughters to marry his son, or marry your son to his daughters. And yet, on your principle, what justice or reason is there in your refusal? What right have you to despise the enginemaker, and the others whom I was just now mentioning? I know that you will say, 'I am better, and better born.' But if the better is not what I say, and virtue consists only in a man saving himself and his, whatever may be his character, then your censure of the engine-maker, and of the physician, and of the other arts of salvation, is ridiculous

¹ Cp. Rep. iii. 407 E.

O my friend! I want you to see that the noble and the good may possibly be something different from saving and being saved: - May not he who is truly a man cease to care about living a certain time?—he knows. as women say, that no man can escape fate, and therefore he is not fond of life; he leaves all that with God, and considers in what way he can best spend his appointed term; --whether by assimilating himself to the constitution under which he lives, as you at this 513 moment have to consider how you may become as like as possible to the Athenian people, if you mean to be in their good graces, and to have power in the state; whereas I want you to think and see whether this is for the interest of either of us ;-I would not have us risk that which is dearest on the acquisition of this power, like the Thessalian enchantresses, who, as they say, bring down the moon from heaven at the risk of their own perdition.

2. The Judgment of the Dead: The Moral of the Tale.

The myth which concludes the Gorgias bears, as may be gathered from what has been already said (pp. 136, 151), a general resemblance to those which occur in the Phaedo and the Republic. Like them, it is intended by Plato, partly to relieve and brighten the work, partly to sum up the argument and at the same time set it in a new and attractive light. The substance of the story is the belief in a Judgment of the Dead, which was widely spread in Plato's time, although it does not seem to occur in Greek literature before Pindar (c. B.C. 400). For in the lines which Plato quotes from the Odvssey (526 D) Minos is not presiding at a tribunal before which the souls of the newly departed appear: he is merely continuing in Hades the work of legislation in which he was engaged while on earth. The names of the judges are variously given in antiquity: the Attic version of the legend added Triptolemus to their number, and so Plato has represented him in the Apology (41 A). But Plato allows himself the same freedom in dealing with 'the traditions of the ancients' as with the facts of history; and the notion that in the days of Cronos the judgment was given previously to the passing of the soul and by living judges, is due entirely to his fertile imagination. It certainly renders the tale more harmonious and complete; and the description of the wicked soul trembling in nakedness and deformity before the judgment-seat makes a striking and effective contrast to the pictures of the earthly happiness of the tyrant which have been previously drawn by Polus and Callicles.

Steph. 523 A

Soc. Listen, then, as story-tellers say, to a very pretty tale, which I dare say that you may be disposed to regard as a fable only, but which, as I believe, is a true tale, for I mean to speak the truth. Homer tells us 1, how Zeus and Poseidon and Pluto divided the empire which they inherited from their father. Now in the days of Cronos there existed a law respecting the destiny of man, which has always been, and still continues to be in Heaven,—that he who has lived all his life in justice and holiness shall go, when he is dead, to the Islands of the Blessed, and dwell there in perfect happiness out of the reach of evil; but that he who has lived unjustly and impiously shall go to the house of vengeance and punishment, which is called Tartarus. And in the time of Cronos, and even quite lately in the reign of Zeus, the judgment was given on the very day on which the men were to die; the judges were alive, and the men were alive; and the consequence was that the judgments were not well given.

Then Pluto and the authorities from the Islands of the Blessed came to Zeus, and said that the souls found their way to the wrong places. Zeus said: 'I shall put a stop to this; the judgments are not well given, because the persons who are judged have their clothes on, for they are alive; and there are many who, having evil souls, are apparelled in fair bodies, or encased in wealth or rank, and, when the day of judgment arrives, numerous witnesses come forward and testify on their

behalf that they have lived righteously. The judges are awed by them, and they themselves too have their clothes on when judging: their eyes and ears and their whole bodies are interposed as a veil before their own souls. All this is a hindrance to them: there are the clothes of the judges and the clothes of the judged.— What is to be done? I will tell you: - In the first place, I will deprive men of the foreknowledge of death, which they possess at present: this power which they have Prometheus has already received my orders to take from them: in the second place, they shall be entirely stripped before they are judged, for they shall be judged when they are dead; and the judge too shall be naked, that is to say, dead-he with his naked soul shall pierce into the other naked souls; and they shall die suddenly and be deprived of all their kindred, and leave their brave attire strewn upon the earth-conducted in this manner, the judgment will be just.

'I knew all about the matter before any of you, and therefore I have made my sons judges; two from Asia, Minos and Rhadamanthus, and one from Europe, Aeacus. And these, when they are dead, shall give 524 judgment in the meadow at the parting of the ways, whence the two roads lead, one to the Islands of the Blessed, and the other to Tartarus. Rhadamanthus shall judge those who come from Asia, and Aeacus those who come from Europe. And to Minos I shall give the primacy, and he shall hold a court of appeal, in case either of the two others are in any doubt:— then the judgment respecting the last journey of men will be as just as possible.'

From this tale, Callicles, which I have heard and believe, I draw the following inferences:—Death, if I am right, is in the first place the separation from one another of two things, soul and body; nothing else.

174 GORGIAS

And after they are separated they retain their several natures, as in life; the body keeps the same habit, and the results of treatment or accident are distinctly visible in it: for example, he who by nature or training or both, was a tall man while he was alive, will remain as he was, after he is dead; and the fat man will remain fat; and so on; and the dead man, who in life had a fancy to have flowing hair, will have flowing hair. And if he was marked with the whip and had the prints of the scourge, or of wounds in him when he was alive, you might see the same in the dead body; and if his limbs were broken or misshapen when he was alive, the same appearance would be visible in the dead. And in a word, whatever was the habit of the body during life would be distinguishable after death, either perfectly, or in a great measure and for a certain time. And I should imagine that this is equally true of the soul, Callicles; when a man is stripped of the body, all the natural or acquired affections of the soul are laid open to view.

And when they come to the judge, as those from Asia come to Rhadamanthus, he places them near him and inspects them quite impartially, not knowing whose the soul is: perhaps he may lay hands on the soul of the great king, or of some other king or potentate, who has no soundness in him, but his soul is marked with the whip, and is full of the prints and scars of perjuries and crimes with which each action has stained him, and 525 he is all crooked with falsehood and imposture, and has no straightness, because he has lived without truth. Him Rhadamanthus beholds, full of all deformity and disproportion, which is caused by licence and luxury and insolence and incontinence, and despatches him ignominiously to his prison, and there he undergoes the punishment which he deserves.

Now the proper office of punishment is twofold: he who is rightly punished ought either to become better and profit by it, or he ought to be made an example to his fellows, that they may see what he suffers, and fear and become better. Those who are improved when they are punished by gods and men, are those whose sins are curable; and they are improved, as in this world so also in another, by pain and suffering; for there is no other way in which they can be delivered from their evil. But they who have been guilty of the worst crimes, and are incurable by reason of their crimes, are made examples; for, as they are incurable, the time has passed at which they can receive any benefit. They get no good themselves, but others get good when they behold them enduring for ever the most terrible and painful and fearful sufferings as the penalty of their sins—there they are, hanging up as examples, in the prison-house of the world below. a spectacle and a warning to all unrighteous men who come thither. And among them, as I confidently affirm, will be found Archelaus, if Polus truly reports of him, and any other tyrant who is like him.

Of these fearful examples, most, as I believe, are taken from the class of tyrants and kings and potentates and public men, for they are the authors of the greatest and most impious crimes, because they have the power. And Homer witnesses to the truth of this; for they are always kings and potentates whom he has described as suffering everlasting punishment in the world below: such were Tantalus and Sisyphus and Tityus. But no one ever described Thersites, or any private person who was a villain, as suffering everlasting punishment, or as incurable. For to commit the worst crimes, as I am inclined to think, was not in his power, and he was happier than those who had the

526 power. No, Callicles, the very bad men come from the class of those who have power 1. And yet in that very class there may arise good men, and worthy of all admiration they are, for where there is great power to do wrong, to live and to die justly is a hard thing, and greatly to be praised, and few there are who attain to this. Such good and true men, however, there have been, and will be again, at Athens and in other states, who have fulfilled their trust righteously; and there is one who is quite famous all over Hellas, Aristeides, the son of Lysimachus. But, in general, great men are also bad, my friend.

As I was saying, Rhadamanthus, when he gets a soul of the bad kind, knows nothing about him, neither who he is, nor who his parents are; he knows only that he has got hold of a villain; and seeing this, he stamps him as curable or incurable, and sends him away to Tartarus, whither he goes and receives his proper recompense. Or, again, he looks with admiration on the soul of some just one who has lived in holiness and truth; he may have been a private man or not; and I should say, Callicles, that he is most likely to have been a philosopher who has done his own work, and not troubled himself with the doings of other men in his lifetime; him Rhadamanthus sends to the Islands of the Blessed. Aeacus does the same; and they both have sceptres, and judge; but Minos alone has a golden sceptre and is seated looking on, as Odysseus in Homer declares that he saw him:

'Holding a sceptre of gold, and giving laws to the dead.'

Now I, Callicles, am persuaded of the truth of these things, and I consider how I shall present my soul whole and undefiled before the judge in that day.

¹ Cp. Rep. x. 615 E.

² Odyss. xi. 569.

Renouncing the honours at which the world aims. I desire only to know the truth, and to live as well as I can, and, when I die, to die as well as I can. And, to the utmost of my power, I exhort all other men to do the same. And, in return for your exhortation of me, I exhort you also to take part in the great combat, which is the combat of life, and greater than every other earthly conflict. And I retort your reproach of me, and say, that you will not be able to help yourself when the day of trial and judgment, of which I was speaking, comes upon you; you will go before the judge, the son of Aegina, and, when he has got you in his grip and is carrying you off, you will gape and your 527 head will swim round, just as mine would in the courts of this world, and very likely some one will shamefully box you on the ears, and put upon you any sort of insult.

Perhaps this may appear to you to be only an old wife's tale, which you will contemn. And there might be reason in your contemning such tales, if by searching we could find out anything better or truer: but now you see that you and Polus and Gorgias, who are the three wisest of the Greeks of our day, are not able to show that we ought to live any life which does not profit in another world as well as in this. And of all that has been said, nothing remains unshaken but the saying, that to do injustice is more to be avoided than to suffer injustice, and that the reality and not the appearance of virtue is to be followed above all things, as well in public as in private life; and that when any one has been wrong in anything, he is to be chastised, and that the next best thing to a man being just is that he should become just, and be chastised and punished; also that he should avoid all flattery of himself as well as of others, of the few or of the many: and rhetoric and any

N

other art should be used by him, and all his actions should be done always, with a view to justice.

Follow me then, and I will lead you where you will be happy in life and after death, as the argument shows. And never mind if some one despises you as a fool, and insults you, if he has a mind; let him strike you, by Zeus, and do you be of good cheer, and do not mind the insulting blow, for you will never come to any harm in the practice of virtue, if you are a really good and true man. When we have practised virtue together, we will apply ourselves to politics, if that seems desirable, or we will advise about whatever else may seem good to us, for we shall be better able to judge then. In our present condition we ought not to give ourselves airs, for even on the most important subjects we are always changing our minds; so utterly stupid are we! Let us, then, take the argument as our guide, which has revealed to us that the best way of life is to practise justice and every virtue in life and death. This way let us go; and in this exhort all men to follow, not in the way to which you trust and in which you exhort me to follow you; for that way, Callicles, is nothing worth.

ALCIBIADES I

Socrates humiliates Alcibiades by showing him his inferiority to the Kings of Lacedaemon and of Persia.

THERE is little substantial reason to doubt the genuineness of the vast majority of the writings which have come down to us under the name of Plato. A few works, however, have been preserved, which are of a less certain character. Of these a small proportion may actually be dialogues written by Plato at an early period of his life, or in hours when the Muses were unpropitious, or they may be the work of members of his school to which, by a natural confusion, his own name has come to be affixed. The remainder and larger number appear to belong to a later date, and are so unmistakably inferior to the undoubted compositions of Plato, that it is hardly possible seriously to maintain their authenticity.

The First Alcibiades is a good specimen of the former class. It is by no means without merit, and is clearly and simply written. The principal ground for suspicion is that it seems to be merely a rewriting of the theme which occupies a considerable space in the Symposium,—the relations of Socrates to Alcibiades. But the colour and glow of the master are wanting: everything betrays the feeble hand of the copyist who is striving to imitate some work of original genius.

The characters of the Dialogue are only two, Socrates and Alcibiades, and no attempt is made to describe the scene or the surroundings. Alcibiades, who is on the point of entering public life, is cross-examined by Socrates as to his fitness for the career of a statesman. Alcibiades at first is confident that he is thoroughly prepared; but Socrates by a series of questions entangles him in self-contradictions, and finally reduces him to a humiliating confession of ignorance. He does not even, as the Delphian inscription recommends, 'know himself,' and much less is he capable of managing the affairs of others.

The passage which follows is a humorous contrast between the greatness and wealth of the Kings of Sparta and Persia and the insignificance of Alcibiades, both in respect of birth and means. The satire which it conveys on the statesmen of Athens is quite in the spirit of Plato; and we must suppose the writer, if not really Plato himself, to have had in mind the depreciatory references to Pericles and other public men in the Gorgias and the Statesman. And it may have been one at least of the objects with which the Dialogue was composed to exhibit the unfitness and incapacity of the politicians of the time, as well as to show that Socrates was not justly to be blamed for the wickedness and folly of some of those who called themselves his disciples. (Cp. Socrates' defence of himself against this charge in the Apology, 24 foll., 33, &c.)

Socrates. Why, you surely know that our city goes to Steph, war now and then with the Lacedaemonians and with Atheres the great king?

Alcibiades. True enough.

Soc. And if you meant to be the ruler of this city.

would you not be right in considering that the Lacedaemonian and Persian king were your true rivals?

Al. I believe that you are right.

Soc. Oh no, my friend, I am quite wrong, and I think that you ought rather to turn your attention to Midias the quail-breeder and others like him, who manage our politics; in whom, as the women would remark, you may still see the slaves' cut of hair, cropping out in their minds as well as on their pates; and they come with their barbarous lingo to flatter us and not to rule us. To these, I say, you should look, and then you need not trouble yourself about your own fitness to contend in such a noble arena: there is no reason why you should either learn what has to be learned, or practise what has to be practised, and only when thoroughly prepared enter on a political career.

Al. There, I think, Socrates, that you are right; I do not suppose, however, that the Spartan generals or the great king are really different from anybody else.

Soc. But, my dear friend, do consider what you are saying.

Al. What am I to consider?

Soc. In the first place, will you be more likely to take care of yourself, if you are in a wholesome fear and dread of them, or if you are not?

Al. Clearly, if I have such a fear of them.

Soc. And do you think that you will sustain any injury if you take care of yourself?

Al. No, I shall be greatly benefited.

Soc. And this is one very important respect in which that notion of yours is bad.

Al. True.

Soc. In the next place, consider that what you say is probably false.

Al. How so?

Soc. Let me ask you whether better natures are likely to be found in noble races or not in noble races?

Al. Clearly in noble races.

Soc. Are not those who are well born and well bred most likely to be perfect in virtue?

Al. Certainly.

Soc. Then let us compare our antecedents with those of the Lacedaemonian and Persian kings; are they inferior to us in descent? Have we not heard that the former are sprung from Heracles, and the latter from Achaemenes, and that the race of Heracles and the race of Achaemenes go back to Perseus, son of Zeus?

Al. Why, so does mine go back to Eurysaces, and 121 he to Zeus!

Soc. And mine, noble Alcibiades, to Daedalus, and he to Hephaestus, son of Zeus. But, for all that, we are far inferior to them. For they are descended 'from Zeus, through a line of kings-either kings of Argos and Lacedaemon, or kings of Persia, a country which the descendants of Achaemenes have always possessed, besides being at various times sovereigns of Asia, as they now are; whereas, we and our fathers were but private persons. How ridiculous would you be thought if you were to make a display of your ancestors and of Salamis the island of Eurysaces, or of Aegina, the habitation of the still more ancient Aeacus, before Artaxerxes, son of Xerxes. You should consider how inferior we are to them both in the derivation of our birth and in other particulars. Did you never observe how great is the property of the Spartan kings? And their wives are under the guardianship of the Ephori, who are public officers and watch over them, in order to preserve as far as possible the purity of the Heracleid blood.

Still greater is the difference among the Persians;

for no one entertains a suspicion that the father of a prince of Persia can be any one but the king. Such is the awe which invests the person of the queen, that any other guard is needless. And when the heir of the kingdom is born, all the subjects of the king feast; and the day of his birth is for ever afterwards kept as a holiday and time of sacrifice by all Asia: whereas, when you and I were born. Alcibiades, as the comic poet says, the neighbours hardly knew of the important event. After the birth of the royal child, he is tended, not by a good-for-nothing woman-nurse, but by the best of the royal eunuchs, who are charged with the care of him, and especially with the fashioning and right formation of his limbs, in order that he may be as shapely as possible; which being their calling, they are held in great honour. And when the young prince is seven years old he is put upon a horse and taken to the riding-masters, and begins to go out hunting. And at fourteen years of age he is handed over to the royal schoolmasters, as they are termed: these are four chosen men, reputed to be the best among the Persians of a certain age; and one of them is the wisest, another the justest, a third the most temperate, and a fourth the most valiant. The first instructs him in the magianism 122 of Zoroaster, the son of Oromasus, which is the worship of the Gods, and teaches him also the duties of his royal office; the second, who is the justest, teaches him always to speak the truth; the third, or most temperate, forbids him to allow any pleasure to be lord over him, that he may be accustomed to be a freeman and king indeed,—lord of himself first, and not a slave: the most valiant trains him to be bold and fearless, telling him that if he fears he is to deem himself a slave; whereas Pericles gave you, Alcibiades, for a tutor Zopyrus the Thracian, a slave of his who was past all other work.

I might enlarge on the nurture and education of your rivals, but that would be tedious; and what I have said is a sufficient sample of what remains to be said. I have only to remark, by way of contrast, that no one cares about your birth or nurture or education, or. I may say, about that of any other Athenian, unless he has a lover who looks after him. And if you cast an eye on the wealth, the luxury, the garments with their flowing trains, the anointings with myrrh, the multitudes of attendants, and all the other bravery of the Persians, you will be ashamed when you discern your own inferiority; or if you look at the temperance and orderliness and ease and grace and magnanimity and courage and endurance and love of toil and desire of glory and ambition of the Lacedaemonians—in all these respects you will see that you are but a child in comparison of them. Even in the matter of wealth, if you value yourself upon that, I must reveal to you how you stand: for if you form an estimate of the wealth of the Lacedaemonians, you will see that our possessions fall far short of theirs. For no one here can compete with them either in the extent and fertility of their own and the Messenian territory, or in the number of their slaves, and especially of the Helots, or of their horses, or of the animals which feed on the Messenian pastures.

But I have said enough of this; and as to gold and silver, there is more of them in Lacedaemon than in all the rest of Hellas, for during many generations gold has been always flowing in to them from the whole Hellenic world, and often from the barbarian also, and never going out, as in the fable of Aesop the fox said to the 123 lion, 'The prints of the feet of those going in are distinct enough;' but who ever saw the trace of money going out of Lacedaemon? and therefore you may safely infer that the inhabitants are the richest of the

Hellenes in gold and silver, and that their kings are the richest of them, for they have a larger share of these things, and they have also a tribute paid to them which is very considerable. Yet the Spartan wealth, though great in comparison of the wealth of the other Hellenes, is as nothing in comparison of that of the Persians and their kings. Why, I have been informed by a credible person who went up to the king [at Susa], that he passed through a large tract of excellent land, extending for nearly a day's journey, which the people of the country called the queen's girdle, and another, which they called her veil; and several other fair and fertile districts, which were reserved for the adornment of the queen, and are named after her several habiliments.

Now. I cannot help thinking to myself, What if some one were to go to Amestris, the wife of Xerxes and mother of Artaxerxes, and say to her, There is a certain Dinomachè, whose whole wardrobe is not worth fifty minae—and that will be more than the value—and she has a son who is possessed of a three-hundred acre patch at Erchiae, and he has a mind to go to war with your son-would she not wonder to what this Alcibiades trusts for success in the conflict? 'He must rely,' she would say to herself, 'upon his training and wisdom these are the things which Hellenes value.' And if she heard that this Alcibiades who is making the attempt is not as yet twenty years old, and is wholly uneducated. and when his lover tells him that he ought to get education and training first, and then go and fight the king, he refuses, and says that he is well enough as he is, would she not be amazed, and ask, 'On what, then, does the youth rely?' And if we replied: He relies on his beauty, and stature, and birth, and mental endowments, she would think that we were mad, Alcibiades, when she compared the advantages which you possess

with those of her own people. And I believe that even 124 Lampido, the daughter of Leotychides, the wife of Archidamus and mother of Agis, all of whom were kings, would have the same feeling; if, in your present uneducated state, you were to turn your thoughts against her son, she too would be equally astonished. But how disgraceful, that we should not have as high a notion of what is required in us as our enemies' wives and mothers have of the qualities which are required in their assailants! O my friend, be persuaded by me, and hear the Delphian inscription, 'Know thyself'not the men whom you think, but these kings are our rivals, and we can only overcome them by pains and skill. And if you fail in the required qualities, you will fail also in becoming renowned among Hellenes and Barbarians, which you seem to desire more than any other man ever desired anything.

ALCIBIADES II

The Gods approve of simple worship.

The Second Alcibiades belongs to that class of writings which are acknowledged by general consent, not only to have no claim to bear the name of Plato, but to have been written at a considerable interval from his time. Its genuineness was doubted in antiquity, and Athenaeus tells us (p. 506 E) that 'by some persons it was ascribed to Xenophon,' an opinion which is entirely without rational foundation. It is full of imitations of Plato, including passages from the Laws, which we know to have been composed at the very end of his life, and also betrays several traces of the Stoic school, whose founder, Zeno of Citium, lived between B.C. 350 and B.C. 260. There is no dramatic power in the work, and the characters, both of Socrates and Alcibiades, are badly sustained and have no resemblance to their historical prototypes.

The Dialogue is a discourse on Prayer, and may be regarded as an amplification of a thought which is attributed to Pythagoras:—
'Men are to be blamed in regard to prayer, because they desire, not true goods, but merely what seem to them to be goods.' (Diog. Lacrt. 6. 42.)

Alcibiades on his way to offer prayer at some temple, meets Socrates, who takes the opportunity to warn him of the importance of the act in which he is about to engage. We often have false ideas of what is good for ourselves:—Alcibiades would certainly be delighted if the Gods would give him the tyranny of the world, and yet this would be an evil, both for himself and for others. Alcibiades is gradually brought to acknowledge that 'the prayer of a fool may be full of danger,' and Socrates advises him to defer his prayers until he has found out how we should behave ourselves towards the Gods and towards men. 'But who will be my teacher?' asks Alcibiades. Socrates hints that he is willing, and Alcibiades gives him the garland which he is wearing, and which is accepted by Socrates as a token of victory.

The following story is related to Alcibiades by Socrates in order to show him what is the kind of worship which the Gods approve. It is not known to us from other sources, and, - if this is not paying too great a compliment to the author's powers,-may even have been invented for the occasion. The time of the supposed event appears to be some period of the Peloponnesian War, and we may observe the grotesque anachronism, beyond all permissible limits, of placing such a story in the mouth of Socrates, the hero of Delium, Potidaea, and Amphipolis (Apology 28 E). The 'moral of the tale,' that men should maintain an attitude of dignity and reticence even before the Gods, is a commonplace of the Stoic writers, and is therefore one of the marks which indicate the comparatively late date of the composition. A similar idea is well expressed in the words of Marcus Aurelius, who, after citing the ancient prayer of the Athenians, 'Rain, rain, O dear Zeus, down on the ploughed fields of the Athenians and on the plains,' adds, 'in truth, we ought not to pray at all, or we ought to pray in this simple and noble fashiou.' (Marc. Aurel., tr. Long, v. § 7.)

Steph. Socrates. And was not the poet whose words I origi
148 nally quoted wiser than we are, when he bade us [pray

God] to defend us from evil even though we asked

for it?

Alcibiades. I believe that you are right.

Soc. The Lacedaemonians, too, whether from admiration of the poet or because they have discovered the idea for themselves, are wont to offer the prayer alike in public and private, that the Gods will give unto them the beautiful as well as the good:—no one is likely to hear them make any further petition. And yet up to the present time they have not been less fortunate than other men; or if they have sometimes met with misfortune, the fault has not been due to their prayer. For surely, as I conceive, the Gods have power either to grant our requests, or to send us the contrary of what we ask.

And now I will relate to you a story which I have heard from certain of our elders. It chanced that when the Athenians and Lacedaemonians were at war, our city lost every battle by land and sea and never gained a victory. The Athenians being annoyed and perplexed how to find a remedy for their troubles, decided to send and enquire at the shrine of Ammon. Their envoys were also to ask, 'Why the Gods always granted the victory to the Lacedaemonians?' 'We,' (they were to say.) 'offer them more and finer sacrifices than any other Hellenic state, and adorn their temples with gifts, as nobody else does; moreover, we make the most solemn and costly processions to them every year, and spend more money in their service than all the rest of the Hellenes put together. But the Lacedaemonians take no thought 149 of such matters, and pay so little respect to the Gods that they have a habit of sacrificing blemished animals to them, and in various ways are less zealous than we are, although their wealth is quite equal to ours.' When they had thus spoken, and had made their request to know what remedy they could find against the evils which troubled them, the prophet made no direct answer,-clearly because he was not allowed by the

God to do so;—but he summoned them to him and said: 'Thus saith Ammon to the Athenians:—"The silent worship of the Lacedaemonians pleaseth me better than all the offerings of the other Hellenes."'

Such were the words of the God, and nothing more. He seems to have meant by 'silent worship' the prayer of the Lacedaemonians, which is indeed widely different from the usual requests of the Hellenes. For they either bring to the altar bulls with gilded horns or make offerings to the Gods, and beg at random for what they need, good or bad. When, therefore, the Gods hear them using words of ill omen they reject these costly processions and sacrifices of theirs. And we ought, I think, to be very careful and consider well what we should say and what leave unsaid. Homer, too, will furnish us with similar stories. For he tells us how the Trojans in making their encampment,

'Offered up whole hecatombs to the immortals,' and how the 'sweet savour' was borne 'to the heavens by the winds;

'But the blessed Gods were averse and received it not. For exceedingly did they hate the holy Ilium, Both Priam and the people of the spear-skilled king.'

So that it was in vain for them to sacrifice and offer gifts, seeing that they were hateful to the Gods, who are not, like vile usurers, to be gained over by bribes.

And it is foolish for us to boast that we are superior to the Lacedaemonians by reason of our much worship.

150 The idea is inconceivable that the Gods have regard, not to the justice and purity of our souls, but to costly processions and sacrifices, which men may celebrate year after year, although they have committed innumer-

¹ Homer, Il. viii. 548.

able crimes against the Gods or against their fellowmen or the state. For the Gods, as Ammon and his prophet declare, are no receivers of gifts, and they scorn such unworthy service. Wherefore also it would seem that wisdom and justice are especially honoured both by the Gods and by men of sense; and they are the wisest and most just who know how to speak and act towards Gods and men. But I should like to hear what your opinion is about these matters.

Al. I agree, Socrates, with you and with the God, whom, indeed, it would be unbecoming for me to oppose.

ERYXIAS

The nature of money.

THE Eryxias, like the Second Alcibiades, is of an entirely un-Platonic character. The grace and charm of style have vanished; the language is clumsy and obscure, and serves rather to conceal, than to express, the thoughts of the writer. The persons of the dialogue are ill-bred and rude; the old Athenian courtesy has gone, and Socrates has several times to interpose in order to prevent the disputants from coming to blows. But beneath this unprepossessing form we find much originality and mental power; and the little work may be fairly reckoned among the most interesting treatises on subjects connected with Political Economy which have come down to us from antiquity.

The following is a brief summary of the Dialogue:—Socrates, while walking with Eryxias, is joined by Erasistratus and Critias. Erasistratus points out one of the Sicilian ambassadors to Athens, who happens to be passing, as the wickedest and richest man in Sicily. A conversation then springs up on the nature of wealth. Erasistratus defines wealth as 'the possession of things valuable in themselves.' But, if so, are not knowledge and wisdom wealth? 'No,' says Eryxias; 'a wise man may starve, if he has no market for his wisdom.' 'This, however,' retorts Socrates, 'does not really happen; the artist will always make money by his craft.'

The argument is now renewed from another point of view:-

Eryxias maintains that riches are a good; Critias that they are sometimes an evil, because they will enable a bad man to carry out his wicked purposes. Socrates suggests that they must first agree as to what is wealth—(1) it must be useful; (2) it must be wanted; (3) we must know how to use it; (4) its elements are infinite; (5) it may be attained by evil means and applied to good ends. The last conclusion is not accepted by Critias, and the dialogue closes by showing that wealth and happiness are not necessarily connected. He is the best off who has the least wants, whereas it is the richest who is the most in want.

The nature of wealth is far clearer to us than it could possibly have been to the ancients. Their industrial system, compared to ours, was extremely imperfect; they depended upon slave labour, and the actual participation in commerce was thought to be beneath the dignity of a gentleman. But it is true, also, that there is hardly any subject which is more beset with fallacies and ambiguities. The course of history shows that these errors are always reappearing in every age and country. Men are so cager in the pursuit of wealth, and the passion for gain is so universal, that we seem unable to profit either by the lessons of the past, or by the caution which our own experience should inspire. And we may still learn much from the study of the ancient writers, of the real nature of wealth and of the good or evil which attends the possession of it.

Steph.

Socrates. Then now we have to consider, What is money? Or else later on we shall be found to differ about the question. For instance, the Carthaginians use money of this sort. Something which is about the size of a stater is tied up in a small piece of leather: what it is, no one knows but the makers. A seal is next set upon the leather, which then passes into circulation, and he who has the largest number of such pieces is esteemed the richest and best off. And yet if any one among us had a mass of such coins he would be no wealthier than if he had so many pebbles from the mountain. At Lacedaemon, again, they use iron by weight which has been rendered useless: and he who has the greatest mass of such iron is thought to be the richest, although elsewhere it has no value. In Ethiopia engraved stones

are employed, of which a Lacedaemonian could make no use. Once more, among the Nomad Scythians a man who owned the house of Polytion would not be thought richer than one who possessed Mount Lycabettus among ourselves.

And clearly those things cannot all be regarded as possessions: for in some cases the possessors would appear none the richer thereby: but, as I was saying. some one of them is thought in one place to be money. and the possessors of it are the wealthy, whereas in some other place it is not money, and the ownership of it does not confer wealth; just as the standard of morals varies, and what is honourable to some men is dishonourable to others. And if we wish to enquire why a house is valuable to us but not to the Scythians, or why the Carthaginians value leather which is worthless to us, or the Lacedaemonians find wealth in iron and we do not, can we not get an answer in some such way as this: Would an Athenian, who had a thousand talents weight of the stones which lie about in the Agora and which we do not employ for any purpose, be thought to be any the richer?

Erasistratus. He certainly would not appear so to me. Soc. But if he possessed a thousand talents weight of some precious stone, we should say that he was very rich?

Eras. Of course.

Soc. The reason is that the one is useless and the other useful?

Eras. Yes.

Soc. And in the same way among the Scythians a house has no value because they have no use for a house, nor would a Scythian set so much store on the finest house in the world as on a leather coat, because he could use the one and not the other. Or

again, the Carthaginian coinage is not wealth in our eyes, for we could not employ it, as we can silver, to procure what we need, and therefore it is of no use to us.

Eras. True.

PARMENIDES

The meeting of Socrates and Parmenides at Athens. Criticism of the Ideas.

THE Parmenides is perhaps the most difficult of all the dialogues of Plato, and one of a group which are not very attractive to the reader who has not been initiated into the 'mysteries of dialectic.' The subject is the Doctrine of Ideas, those metaphysical abstractions which occupied the mind of Plato more or less during the greater part of his life. They have often been supposed to be the keystone of his system, on which all his other thoughts and conceptions depend for stability.

This view, however, goes beyond the truth. It is a mistake to imagine that Plato had in view a complete scheme of philosophy, which he endeavoured to draw out in a series of treatises. His genius was unsystematic and irregular; he was almost as much a poet as a philosopher; and the testimony of his own writings is sufficient to show that he fell at various periods under the influence of different teachers. The Ideas ought rather to be treated by us as an attempt to convey Plato's conviction that there was a truth unrealized beyond sense, which could only be grasped by the mind when freed from the thraldom of the body. But he was greatly perplexed by the difficulty of finding an adequate expression of his thoughts, and he was perfectly conscious of the many and serious objections which could be urged against his own doctrines.

In the Parmenides, which we may reasonably consider a work of Plato's later years, he has reached a stage at which he is able by an extraordinary effort of intellectual power to produce a criticism of the Ideas which he himself cannot refute. Yet he hints by the mouth of Parmenides that he is still convinced of their reality and existence; for, without abstract ideas, thought and reasoning would be impossible. And in the Sophist he resumes the topic with more success, and clears away some of the obstacles to his theory which in the Parmenides had appeared to him to be insuperable.

We had come from our home at Clazomenae to Steph. Athens, and met Adeimantus and Glaucon in the 126 Agora. Welcome, Cephalus, said Adeimantus, taking me by the hand; is there anything which we can do for you in Athens?

Yes; that is why I am here; I wish to ask a favour of you.

What may that be? he said.

I want you to tell me the name of your half-brother, which I have forgotten; he was a mere child when I last came hither from Clazomenae, but that was a long time ago; his father's name, if I remember rightly, was Pyrilampes?

Yes, he said, and the name of our brother, Antiphon; but why do you ask?

Let me introduce some countrymen of mine, I said; they are lovers of philosophy, and have heard that Antiphon was intimate with a certain Pythodorus, a friend of Zeno, and remembers a conversation which took place between Socrates, Zeno, and Parmenides many years ago, Pythodorus having often recited it to him.

Quite true.

And could we hear it? I asked.

Nothing easier, he replied; when he was a youth he made a careful study of the piece; at present his thoughts run in another direction; like his grandfather Antiphon he is devoted to horses. But, if that is what you want, let us go and look for him; he dwells at Melita, which is quite near, and he has only just left us to go home.

Accordingly we went to look for him; he was at 127 home, and in the act of giving a bridle to a smith to be fitted. When he had done with the smith, his brothers told him the purpose of our visit; and he saluted me as an acquaintance whom he remembered from my

former visit, and we asked him to repeat the dialogue. At first he was not very willing, and complained of the trouble, but at length he consented.

He told us that Pythodorus had described to him the appearance of Parmenides and Zeno; they came to Athens, as he said, at the great Panathenaea; the former was, at the time of his visit, about 65 years old, very white with age, but well favoured. Zeno was nearly 40 years of age, tall and fair to look upon; in the days of his youth he was reported to have been beloved by Parmenides. He said that they lodged with Pythodorus in the Ceramicus, outside the wall, whither Socrates, then a very young man, came to see them, and many others with him; they wanted to hear the writings of Zeno, which had been brought to Athens for the first time on the occasion of their visit. These Zeno himself read to them in the absence of Parmenides, and had very nearly finished when Pythodorus entered, and with him Parmenides and Aristoteles who was afterwards one of the Thirty, and heard the little that remained of the dialogue. Pythodorus had heard Zeno repeat them before.

When the recitation was completed, Socrates requested that the first thesis of the first argument might be read over again, and this having been done, he said: What is your meaning, Zeno? Do you maintain that if being is many, it must be both like and unlike, and that this is impossible, for neither can the like be unlike, nor the unlike like—is that your position?

Just so, said Zeno.

And if the unlike cannot be like, or the like unlike, then according to you, being could not be many; for this would involve an impossibility. In all that you say have you any other purpose except to disprove the being of the many? and is not each division of your

treatise intended to furnish a separate proof of this, there being in all as many proofs of the not-being of the many as you have composed arguments? Is that your meaning, or have I misunderstood you?

No, said Zeno; you have correctly understood my 128 general purpose.

I see, Parmenides, said Socrates, that Zeno would like to be not only one with you in friendship but your second self in his writings too; he puts what you say in another way, and would fain make believe that he is telling us something which is new. For you, in your poems, say-The All is one, and of this you adduce excellent proofs; and he on the other hand says— There is no many; and on behalf of this he offers overwhelming evidence. You affirm unity, he denies plurality. And so you deceive the world into believing that you are saying different things when really you are saying much the same. This is a strain of art beyond the reach of most of us.

Yes, Socrates, said Zeno. But although you are as keen as a Spartan hound in pursuing the track, you do not fully apprehend the true motive of the composition. which is not really such an artificial work as you imagine; for what you speak of was an accident; there was no pretence of a great purpose; nor any serious intention of deceiving the world. The truth is, that these writings of mine were meant to protect the arguments of Parmenides against those who make fun of him and seek to show the many ridiculous and contradictory results which they suppose to follow from the affirmation of the one. My answer is addressed to the partisans of the many, whose attack I return with interest by retorting upon them that their hypothesis of the being of many, if carried out, appears to be still more ridiculous than the hypothesis of the being of one. Zeal for my master led me to write the book in the days of my youth, but some one stole the copy; and therefore I had no choice whether it should be published or not; the motive, however, of writing, was not the ambition of an elder man, but the pugnacity of a young one. This you do not seem to see, Socrates; though in other respects, as I was saying, your notion is a very just one.

I understand, said Socrates, and quite accept your account. But tell me. Zeno, do you not further think 129 that there is an idea of likeness in itself, and another idea of unlikeness, which is the opposite of likeness, and that in these two, you and I and all other things to which we apply the term many, participate—things which participate in likeness become in that degree and manner like; and so far as they participate in unlikeness become in that degree unlike, or both like and unlike in the degree in which they participate in both? And may not all things partake of both opposites, and be both like and unlike, by reason of this participation?— Where is the wonder? Now if a person could prove the absolute like to become unlike, or the absolute unlike to become like, that, in my opinion, would indeed be a wonder; but there is nothing extraordinary, Zeno, in showing that the things which only partake of likeness and unlikeness experience both. Nor, again, if a person were to show that all is one by partaking of one, and at the same time many by partaking of many, would that be very astonishing. But if he were to show me that the absolute one was many, or the absolute many one, I should be truly amazed.

And so of all the rest: I should be surprised to hear that the natures or ideas themselves had these opposite qualities; but not if a person wanted to prove of me that I was many and also one. When he wanted to

show that I was many he would say that I have a right and a left side, and a front and a back, and an upper and a lower half, for I cannot deny that I partake of multitude: when, on the other hand, he wants to prove that I am one, he will say, that we who are here assembled are seven, and that I am one and partake of the one. In both instances he proves his case. So again, if a person shows that such things as wood, stones, and the like, being many are also one, we admit that he shows the coexistence of the one and many, but he does not show that the many are one or the one many: he is uttering not a paradox but a truism. however, as I just now suggested, some one were to abstract simple notions of like, unlike, one, many, rest, motion, and similar ideas, and then to show that these admit of admixture and separation in themselves, I should be very much astonished. This part of the argument appears to be treated by you, Zeno, in a very spirited manner; but, as I was saying, I should be far more amazed if any one found in the ideas themselves 130 which are apprehended by reason, the same puzzle and entanglement which you have shown to exist in visible objects.

While Socrates was speaking, Pythodorus thought that Parmenides and Zeno were not altogether pleased at the successive steps of the argument; but still they gave the closest attention, and often looked at one another, and smiled as if in admiration of him. When he had finished, Parmenides expressed their feelings in the following words:—

Socrates, he said, I admire the bent of your mind towards philosophy; tell me now, was this your own distinction between ideas in themselves and the things which partake of them? and do you think that there is an idea of likeness apart from the likeness which we

possess, and of the one and many, and of the other things which Zeno mentioned?

I think that there are such ideas, said Socrates.

Parmenides proceeded: And would you also make absolute ideas of the just and the beautiful and the good, and of all that class?

Yes, he said, I should.

And would you make an idea of man apart from us and from all other human creatures, or of fire and water?

I am often undecided, Parmenides, as to whether I ought to include them or not.

And would you feel equally undecided, Socrates, about things of which the mention may provoke a smile?—I mean such things as hair, mud, dirt, or anything else which is vile and paltry; would you suppose that each of these has an idea distinct from the actual objects with which we come into contact, or not?

Certainly not, said Socrates; visible things like these are such as they appear to us, and I am afraid that there would be an absurdity in assuming any idea of them, although I sometimes get disturbed, and begin to think that there is nothing without an idea; but then again, when I have taken up this position, I run away, because I am afraid that I may fall into a bottomless pit of nonsense, and perish; and so I return to the ideas of which I was just now speaking, and occupy myself with them.

Yes, Socrates, said Parmenides; that is because you are still young; the time will come, if I am not mistaken, when philosophy will have a firmer grasp of you, and then you will not despise even the meanest things; at your age, you are too much disposed to regard the opinions of men. But I should like to know whether you mean that there are certain ideas of which all other

things partake, and from which they derive their names; that similars, for example, become similar, because they 131 partake of similarity; and great things become great, because they partake of greatness; and that just and beautiful things become just and beautiful, because they partake of justice and beauty?

Yes, certainly, said Socrates, that is my meaning.

Then each individual partakes either of the whole of the idea or else of a part of the idea? Can there be any other mode of participation?

There cannot be, he said.

Then do you think that the whole idea is one, and yet, being one, is in each one of the many?

Why not, Parmenides? said Socrates.

Because one and the same thing will exist as a whole at the same time in many separate individuals, and will therefore be in a state of separation from itself.

Nay, but the idea may be like the day, which is one and the same in many places at once, and yet continuous with itself; in this way each idea may be one and the same in all at the same time.

I like your way, Socrates, of making one in many places at once. You mean to say, that if I were to spread out a sail and cover a number of men, there would be one whole including many—is not that your meaning?

I think so.

And would you say that the whole sail includes each man, or a part of it only, and different parts different men?

The latter.

Then, Socrates, the ideas themselves will be divisible, and things which participate in them will have a part of them only and not the whole idea existing in each of them?

That seems to follow.

Then would you like to say, Socrates, that the one idea is really divisible and yet remains one?

Certainly not, he said.

Suppose that you divide absolute greatness, and that of the many great things, each one is great in virtue of a portion of greatness less than absolute greatness—is that conceivable?

No.

Or will each equal thing, if possessing some small portion of equality less than absolute equality, be equal to some other thing by virtue of that portion only?

Impossible.

Or suppose one of us to have a portion of smallness; this is but a part of the small, and therefore the absolutely small is greater; if the absolutely small be greater, that to which the part of the small is added will be smaller and not greater than before.

How absurd!

Then in what way, Socrates, will all things participate in the ideas, if they are unable to participate in them either as parts or wholes?

Indeed, he said, you have asked a question which is not easily answered.

Well, said Parmenides, and what do you say of another question?

What question?

I imagine that the way in which you are led to assume 132 one idea of each kind is as follows:—You see a number of great objects, and when you look at them there seems to you to be one and the same idea (or nature) in them all; hence you conceive of greatness as one.

Very true, said Socrates.

And if you go on and allow your mind in like manner to embrace in one view the idea of greatness

and of great things which are not the idea, and to compare them, will not another greatness arise, which will appear to be the source of all these?

It would seem so.

Then another idea of greatness now comes into view over and above absolute greatness, and the individuals which partake of it; and then another, over and above all these, by virtue of which they will all be great, and so each idea instead of being one will be infinitely multiplied.

But may not the ideas, asked Socrates, be thoughts only, and have no proper existence except in our minds, Parmenides? For in that case each idea may still be one, and not experience this infinite multiplication.

And can there be individual thoughts which are thoughts of nothing?

Impossible, he said.

The thought must be of something?

Yes.

Of something which is or which is not?

Of something which is.

Must it not be of a single something, which the thought recognizes as attaching to all, being a single form or nature?

Yes.

And will not the something which is apprehended as one and the same in all, be an idea?

From that, again, there is no escape.

Then, said Parmenides, if you say that everything else participates in the ideas, must you not say either that everything is made up of thoughts, and that all things think; or that they are thoughts but have no thought?

The latter view, Parmenides, is no more rational than the previous one. In my opinion, the ideas are, as it were, patterns fixed in nature, and other things are like them, and resemblances of them—what is meant by the participation of other things in the ideas, is really assimilation to them.

But if, said he, the individual is like the idea, must not the idea also be like the individual, in so far as the individual is a resemblance of the idea? That which is like, cannot be conceived of as other than the like of like.

Impossible.

And when two things are alike, must they not partake of the same idea?

They must.

And will not that of which the two partake, and which makes them alike, be the idea itself?

Certainly.

Then the idea cannot be like the individual, or the individual like the idea; for if they are alike, some ¹³³ further idea of likeness will always be coming to light, and if that be like anything else, another; and new ideas will be always arising, if the idea resembles that which partakes of it?

Quite true.

The theory, then, that other things participate in the ideas by resemblance, has to be given up, and some other mode of participation devised?

It would seem so.

Do you see then, Socrates, how great is the difficulty of affirming the ideas to be absolute?

Yes, indeed.

And, further, let me say that as yet you only understand a small part of the difficulty which is involved if you make of each thing a single idea, parting it off from other things.

What difficulty? he said.

There are many, but the greatest of all is this:—If an opponent argues that these ideas, being such as we say they ought to be, must remain unknown, no one can prove to him that he is wrong, unless he who denies their existence be a man of great ability and knowledge, and is willing to follow a long and laborious demonstration; he will remain unconvinced, and still insist that they cannot be known.

What do you mean, Parmenides? said Socrates.

In the first place, I think, Socrates, that you, or any one who maintains the existence of absolute essences, will admit that they cannot exist in us.

No, said Socrates; for then they would be no longer absolute.

True, he said; and therefore when ideas are what they are in relation to one another, their essence is determined by a relation among themselves, and has nothing to do with the resemblances, or whatever they are to be termed, which are in our sphere, and from which we receive this or that name when we partake of them. And the things which are within our sphere and have the same names with them, are likewise only relative to one another, and not to the ideas which have the same names with them, but belong to themselves and not to them.

What do you mean? said Socrates.

I may illustrate my meaning in this way, said Parmenides:—A master has a slave; now there is nothing absolute in the relation between them, which is simply a relation of one man to another. But there is also an idea of mastership in the abstract, which is relative to the idea of slavery in the abstract. These natures have 134 nothing to do with us, nor we with them; they are concerned with themselves only, and we with ourselves. Do you see my meaning?

Yes, said Socrates, I quite see your meaning.

And will not knowledge—I mean absolute knowledge—answer to absolute truth?

Certainly.

And each kind of absolute knowledge will answer to each kind of absolute being?

Yes.

But the knowledge which we have, will answer to the truth which we have; and again, each kind of knowledge which we have, will be a knowledge of each kind of being which we have?

Certainly.

But the ideas themselves, as you admit, we have not, and cannot have?

No, we cannot.

And the absolute natures or kinds are known severally by the absolute idea of knowledge?

Yes.

And we have not got the idea of knowledge?

No.

Then none of the ideas are known to us, because we have no share in absolute knowledge?

I suppose not.

Then the nature of the beautiful in itself, and of the good in itself, and all other ideas which we suppose to exist absolutely, are unknown to us?

It would seem so.

I think that there is a stranger consequence still.

What is it?

Would you, or would you not say, that absolute knowledge, if there is such a thing, must be a far more exact knowledge than our knowledge; and the same of beauty and of the rest?

Yes.

And if there be such a thing as participation in

absolute knowledge, no one is more likely than God to have this most exact knowledge?

Certainly.

But then, will God, having absolute knowledge, have a knowledge of human things?

Why not?

Because, Socrates, said Parmenides, we have admitted that the ideas are not valid in relation to human things; nor human things in relation to them; the relations of either are limited to their respective spheres.

Yes, that has been admitted.

And if God has this perfect authority, and perfect knowledge, his authority cannot rule us, nor his knowledge know us, or any human thing; just as our authority does not extend to the gods, nor our knowledge know anything which is divine, so by parity of reason they, being gods, are not our masters, neither do they know the things of men.

Yet, surely, said Socrates, to deprive God of knowledge is monstrous.

These, Socrates, said Parmenides, are a few, and 135 only a few of the difficulties in which we are involved if ideas really are and we determine each one of them to be an absolute unity. He who hears what may be said against them will deny the very existence of them—and even if they do exist, he will say that they must of necessity be unknown to man; and he will seem to have reason on his side, and, as we were remarking just now, will be very difficult to convince; a man must be gifted with very considerable ability before he can learn that everything has a class and an absolute essence; and still more remarkable will he be who discovers all these things for himself, and having thoroughly investigated them is able to teach them to others.

I agree with you, Parmenides, said Socrates; and what you say is very much to my mind.

And yet, Socrates, said Parmenides, if a man, fixing his attention on these and the like difficulties, does away with ideas of things and will not admit that every individual thing has its own determinate idea which is always one and the same, he will have nothing on which his mind can rest; and so he will utterly destroy the power of reasoning, as you seem to me to have particularly noted.

Very true, he said.

But, then, what is to become of philosophy? Whither shall we turn, if the ideas are unknown?

I certainly do not see my way at present.

Yes, said Parmenides; and I think that this arises, Socrates, out of your attempting to define the beautiful, the just, the good, and the ideas generally, without sufficient previous training. I noticed your deficiency, when I heard you talking here with your friend Aristoteles, the day before yesterday. The impulse that carries you towards philosophy is assuredly noble and divine; but there is an art which is called by the vulgar idle talking, and which is often imagined to be useless; in that you must train and exercise yourself, now that you are young, or truth will elude your grasp.

And what is the nature of this exercise, Parmenides, which you would recommend?

That which you heard Zeno practising; at the same time, I give you credit for saying to him that you did not care to examine the perplexity in reference to visible things, or to consider the question in that way; but only in reference to objects of thought, and to what may be called ideas.

Why, yes, he said, there appears to me to be no

difficulty in showing by this method that visible things are like and unlike and may experience anything.

Quite true, said Parmenides; but I think that you should go a step further, and consider not only the consequences which flow from a given hypothesis, but 136 also the consequences which flow from denying the hypothesis; and that will be still better training for you.

What do you mean? he said.

I mean, for example, that in the case of this very hypothesis of Zeno's about the many, you should inquire not only what will be the consequences to the many in relation to themselves and to the one, and to the one in relation to itself and the many, on the hypothesis of the being of the many, but also what will be the consequences to the one and the many in their relation to themselves and to each other, on the opposite hypothesis. Or, again, if likeness is or is not, what will be the consequences in either of these cases to the subjects of the hypothesis, and to other things, in relation both to themselves and to one another, and so of unlikeness; and the same holds good of motion and rest, of generation and destruction, and even of being and not-being. In a word, when you suppose anything to be or not to be, or to be in any way affected, you must look at the consequences in relation to the thing itself, and to any other things which you choose,—to each of them singly, to more than one, and to all; and so of other things, you must look at them in relation to themselves and to anything else which you suppose either to be or not to be, if you would train yourself perfectly and see the real truth.

THEAETETUS

THE Theaetetus is a dialogue for which it is peculiarly difficult to assign a place in the series of the Platonic writings. In style it belongs rather to the earlier class, having many affinities to such works as the Protagoras or the Meno. But in the order of thought it is nearest akin to the Sophist and the Statesman, with which also it appears to be expressly connected by Plato.

The only indication of date which is furnished by the Dialogue itself is the mention in the prologue of the fighting near Corinth. This, however, contains an element of uncertainty. If the Corinthian War (B. c. 394-387) is intended (which is most probably the case), Plato must at least have passed his fortieth year when he wrote the Theaetetus. Or, if the reference is to the later operations in B. c. 369, when Iphicrates was in command at the Isthmus, we must refer the composition of the work to a correspondingly later time in Plato's life.

The principal subject of the dialogue is a discussion of the nature of knowledge and the manner in which it is received by us through perception and sensation. It takes the form chiefly of a criticism of the doctrine of Protagoras that 'man is the measure of all things,' which is identified with the Heracleitean theory that 'all is in a flux,' and is explained by Socrates to mean that all knowledge is relative, both in the intellectual and the moral sphere.

Neither of the two passages which follow relate to the main theme. They have the character of digressions, which pleasantly help to beguile the long and sometimes tedious course of the discussion. And we are inclined perhaps to sympathize with Theodorus, when he is dragged back by the indefatigable Socrates into the direct path, and to say that we 'prefer the digressions to the argument itself' (177 C).

1. Socrates, a midwife and the son of a midwife.

Socrates is here humorously described by one of those figures of speech in which Plato takes such delight, as the midwife who delivers men of their thoughts and ideas, 'the fair and immortal children of the mind,' of whom he discourses in the Symposium (Symp. 209). For Socrates is unlike any other of the great teachers of mankind; he does not convey ideas to his hearers, but elicits their intellectual conceptions from them, more sometimes, as Theaetetus says, 'than was ever in them' (210).

This is part of his mission, or rather, perhaps, another way of describing it; and when the thought comes to the light, he tries and tests it in every way to see whether it is the genuine offspring of wisdom, or the spurious progeny of self-conceit and vanity. Nor can we wonder that the 'parents of the child,' when it was condemned and pronounced wanting by the merciless judge, were apt to 'fall into a rage,' and fancied that they had been 'deprived of some cherished possession.'

Socrates. Such are the midwives, whose task is a very steph. important one, but not so important as mine; for women do not bring into the world at one time real children, and at another time counterfeits which are with difficulty distinguished from them; if they did, then the discernment of the true and false birth would be the crowning achievement of the art of midwifery—you would think so?

Theaetetus. Indeed I should.

Soc. Well, my art of midwifery is in most respects like theirs; but differs, in that I attend men and not women, and I look after their souls when they are in labour, and not after their bodies: and the triumph of my art is in thoroughly examining whether the thought which the mind of the young man brings forth is a false idol or a noble and true birth. And like the midwives, I am barren, and the reproach which is often made against me, that I ask questions of others and have not the wit to answer them myself, is very justthe reason is, that the god compels me to be a midwife. but does not allow me to bring forth. And therefore I am not myself at all wise, nor have I anything to show which is the invention or birth of my own soul, but those who converse with me profit. Some of them appear dull enough at first, but afterwards, as our acquaintance ripens, if the god is gracious to them, they all make astonishing progress; and this in the opinion of others as well as in their own. It is quite clear that they never learned anything from me; the

VOI T

many fine discoveries to which they cling are of their own making. But to me and the god they owe their delivery.

And the proof of my words is, that many of them in their ignorance, either in their self-conceit despising me, or falling under the influence of others, have gone away too soon: and have not only lost the children of whom I had previously delivered them by an ill bringing up, but have stifled whatever else they had in them by evil communications, being fonder of lies and shams than of the truth; and they have at last ended by seeing themselves, as others see them, to be great 151 fools. Aristeides, the son of Lysimachus, is one of them, and there are many others. The truants often return to me, and beg that I would consort with them again—they are ready to go to me on their knees-and then, if my familiar allows, which is not always the case, I receive them, and they begin to grow again. Dire are the pangs which my art is able to arouse and to allay in those who consort with me, just like the pangs of women in childbirth; night and day they are full of perplexity and travail which is even worse than that of the women. So much for them. And there are others, Theaetetus, who come to me apparently having nothing in them; and as I know that they have no need of my art, I coax them into marrying some one, and by the grace of God I can generally tell who is likely to do them good. Many of them I have given away to Prodicus, and many to other inspired sages.

I tell you this long story, friend Theaetetus, because I suspect, as indeed you seem to think yourself, that you are in labour—great with some conception. Come then to me, who am a midwife's son and myself a mid-

 $^{^1}$ Reading with the Bodleian MS. \hbar αὐτοὶ ὑπ' ἄλλων πεισθέντες.

wife, and do your best to answer the questions which I will ask you. And if I abstract and expose your first-born, because I discover upon inspection that the conception which you have formed is a vain shadow, do not guarrel with me on that account, as the manner of women is when their first children are taken from them. For I have actually known some who were ready to bite me when I deprived them of a darling folly; they did not perceive that I acted from goodwill, not knowing that no god is the enemy of man-that was not within the range of their ideas; neither am I their enemy in all this, but it would be wrong for me to admit falsehood, or to stifle the truth. Once more, then. Theaetetus, I repeat my old question, 'What is knowledge?'-and do not say that you cannot tell: but quit yourself like a man, and by the help of God you will be able to tell.

(2) The Lawyer and the Philosopher.

The description of the lawyer and the philosopher in the Theaetetus is one of the most striking delineations of character in all the writings of Plato. The two types of men are opposed to one another with perfect skill and completeness. The contrast intended by Plato is the same as that which has always existed among mankind under various names and disguises. Aristotle has it in view when he speaks of the 'life of action' and the 'life of speculation' (Pol. vii. 2, 3), and a similar difference also appears in another age as the 'secular' and the 'religious life.'

The philosopher is the man of thought and reflection, who dwells apart from others in a world of his own imagination. His mind is absorbed in the contemplation of the eternal and divine; he cannot condescend to the things 'which lie at his feet.' He sees the faults and follies of human nature so clearly that he is incapacitated for action. But if he has almost too little of the mundane spirit, his rival and opponent is wholly taken up with the matters of daily life. He is the man of affairs, who is unable to snatch an hour from business for solitude and meditation, and whose horizon is bounded by the narrow limits of self-interest. The

higher impulses of his nature have withered and died in this arid atmosphere. He is a match for the philosopher in the law courts and the senate; but when he is drawn into a philosophical argument, what a laughing stock does he become to the wise man!

This is a picture which Plato is never weary of painting:—the philosopher and the politician in the Euthydemus (Euthyd. 304); the philosopher and the man of the world in the Gorgias (Gorg. 484); the true and the false rhetorician in the Phaedrus (Phaedr. 266), are all variations of the same theme. The union of the two characters in one person is the favourite dream of Plato; the philosopher is to be the king in the state, or, at least, the princes of this world must be trained and educated in the school of philosophy (Rep. v. 473).

Steph.
172
B

Socrates. Here arises a new question, Theodorus, which threatens to be more serious than the last.

Theodorus. Well, Socrates, we have plenty of leisure.

Soc. That is true, and your remark recalls to my mind an observation which I have often made, that those who have passed their days in the pursuit of philosophy are ridiculously at fault when they have to appear and speak in court. How natural is this!

Theod. What do you mean?

Soc. I mean to say, that those who have been trained in philosophy and liberal pursuits are as unlike those who from their youth upwards have been knocking about in the courts and such places, as a freeman is in breeding unlike a slave.

Theod. In what is the difference seen?

Soc. In the leisure spoken of by you, which a freeman can always command: he has his talk out in peace, and, like ourselves, he wanders at will from one subject to another, and from a second to a third,—if the fancy takes him, he begins again, as we are doing now, caring not whether his words are many or few: his only aim is to attain the truth. But the lawyer is always in a hurry; there is the water of the clepsydra driving him on, and not allowing him to expatiate at will: and there is his adversary standing over him, enforcing his rights; the indictment, which in their phraseology is termed the affidavit, is recited at the time: and from this he must not deviate. He is a servant, and is continually disputing about a fellow-servant before his master, who is seated, and has the cause in his hands; the trial is never about some indifferent matter, but always concerns himself; and often the race is for his life.

The consequence has been, that he has become keen 173 and shrewd; he has learned how to flatter his master in word and indulge him in deed; but his soul is small and unrighteous. His condition, which has been that of a slave from his youth upwards, has deprived him of growth and uprightness and independence; dangers and fears, which were too much for his truth and honesty, came upon him in early years, when the tenderness of youth was unequal to them, and he has been driven into crooked ways; from the first he has practised deception and retaliation, and has become stunted and warped. And so he has passed out of youth into manhood, having no soundness in him; and is now, as he thinks, a master in wisdom. Such is the lawyer, Theodorus. Will you have the companion picture of the philosopher, who is of our brotherhood: or shall we return to the argument? Do not let us abuse the freedom of digression which we claim.

Theod. Nay, Socrates, not until we have finished what we are about; for you truly said that we belong to a brotherhood which is free, and are not the servants of the argument; but the argument is our servant, and must wait our leisure. Who is our judge? Or where is the spectator having any right to censure or control us, as he might the poets?

Soc. Then, as this is your wish, I will describe the

leaders: for there is no use in talking about the inferior sort. In the first place, the lords of philosophy have never, from their youth upwards, known their way to the Agora, or the dicastery, or the council, or any other political assembly: they neither see nor hear the laws or decrees, as they are called, of the state written or recited; the eagerness of political societies in the attainment of offices-clubs, and banquets, and revels, and singing-maidens.—do not enter even into their dreams. Whether any event has turned out well or ill in the city, what disgrace may have descended to any one from his ancestors, male or female, are matters of which the philosopher no more knows than he can tell, as they say, how many pints are contained in the ocean. Neither is he conscious of his ignorance. For he does not hold aloof in order that he may gain a reputation; but the truth is, that the outer form of him only is in the city: his mind, disdaining the littlenesses and nothingnesses of human things, is 'flying all abroad' as Pindar says, measuring earth and heaven and the things which are under and on the earth and above the heaven, interrogating the whole 174 nature of each and all in their entirety, but not condescending to anything which is within reach.

Theod. What do you mean, Socrates?

Soc. I will illustrate my meaning, Theodorus, by the jest which the clever witty Thracian handmaid is said to have made about Thales, when he fell into a well as he was looking up at the stars. She said, that he was so eager to know what was going on in heaven, that he could not see what was before his feet. This is a jest which is equally applicable to all philosophers. For the philosopher is wholly unacquainted with his next-door neighbour; he is ignorant, not only of what he is doing, but he hardly knows whether he is a man or an

animal; he is searching into the essence of man, and busy in enquiring what belongs to such a nature to do or suffer different from any other;—I think that you understand me, Theodorus?

Theod. I do, and what you say is true.

Soc. And thus, my friend, on every occasion, private as well as public, as I said at first, when he appears in a law-court, or in any place in which he has to speak of things which are at his feet and before his eyes, he is the jest, not only of Thracian handmaids but of the general herd, tumbling into wells and every sort of disaster through his inexperience. His awkwardness is fearful, and gives the impression of imbecility. When he is reviled, he has nothing personal to say in answer to the civilities of his adversaries, for he knows no scandals of any one, and they do not interest him; and therefore he is laughed at for his sheepishness; and when others are being praised and glorified, in the simplicity of his heart he cannot help going into fits of laughter, so that he seems to be a downright idiot.

When he hears a tyrant or king eulogized, he fancies that he is listening to the praises of some keeper of cattle—a swineherd, or shepherd, or perhaps a cowherd, who is congratulated on the quantity of milk which he squeezes from them; and he remarks that the creature whom they tend, and out of whom they squeeze the wealth, is of a less tractable and more insidious nature. Then, again, he observes that the great man is of necessity as ill-mannered and uneducated as any shepherd—for he has no leisure, and he is surrounded by a wall, which is his mountain-pen.

Hearing of enormous landed proprietors of ten thousand acres and more, our philosopher deems this to be a trifle, because he has been accustomed to think of the whole earth; and when they sing the praises

of family, and say that some one is a gentleman because he can show seven generations of wealthy 175 ancestors, he thinks that their sentiments only betray a dull and narrow vision in those who utter them, and who are not educated enough to look at the whole, nor to consider that every man has had thousands and ten thousands of progenitors, and among them have been rich and poor, kings and slaves, Hellenes and barbarians, innumerable. And when people pride themselves on having a pedigree of twenty-five ancestors, which goes back to Heracles, the son of Amphitryon, he cannot understand their poverty of ideas. Why are they unable to calculate that Amphitryon had a twenty-fifth ancestor, who might have been anybody, and was such as fortune made him, and he had a fiftieth, and so on? He amuses himself with the notion that they cannot count, and thinks that a little arithmetic would have got rid of their senseless vanity, Now, in all these cases our philosopher is derided by the vulgar, partly because he is thought to despise them, and also because he is ignorant of what is before him, and always at a loss.

Theod. That is very true, Socrates.

Soc. But, O my friend, when he draws the other into upper air, and gets him out of his pleas and rejoinders into the contemplation of justice and injustice in their own nature and in their difference from one another and from all other things; or from the commonplaces about the happiness of a king or of a rich man to the consideration of government, and of human happiness and misery in general—what they are, and how a man is to attain the one and avoid the other—when that narrow, keen, little legal mind is called to account about all this, he gives the philosopher his revenge; for dizzied by the height at which he is hanging,

whence he looks down into space, which is a strange experience to him, he being dismayed, and lost, and stammering broken words, is laughed at, not by Thracian handmaidens or any other uneducated persons, for they have no eye for the situation, but by every man who has not been brought up a slave.

Such are the two characters, Theodorus: the one of the freeman, who has been trained in liberty and leisure, whom you call the philosopher,—him we cannot blame because he appears simple and of no account when he has to perform some menial task, such as packing up bed-clothes, or flavouring a sauce or fawning speech; the other character is that of the man who is able to do all this kind of service smartly and neatly, 176 but knows not how to wear his cloak like a gentleman; still less with the music of discourse can he hymn the true life aright which is lived by immortals or men blessed of heaven.

Theod. If you could only persuade everybody, Socrates, as you do me, of the truth of your words, there would be more peace and fewer evils among men.

Soc. Evils, Theodorus, can never pass away; for there must always remain something which is antagonistic to good. Having no place among the gods in heaven, of necessity they hover around the mortal nature, and this earthly sphere. Wherefore we ought to fly away from earth to heaven as quickly as we can; and to fly away is to become like God, as far as this is possible; and to become like him, is to become holy, just, and wise. But, O my friend, you cannot easily convince mankind that they should pursue virtue or avoid vice, not merely in order that a man may seem to be good, which is the reason given by the world, and in my judgment is only a repetition of an old wives' fable. Whereas, the truth is that God is never in any way

unrighteous—he is perfect righteousness; and he of us who is the most righteous is most like him. Herein is seen the true cleverness of a man, and also his nothingness and want of manhood. For to know this is true wisdom and virtue, and ignorance of this is manifest folly and vice. All other kinds of wisdom or cleverness, which seem only, such as the wisdom of politicians, or the wisdom of the arts, are coarse and vulgar.

The unrighteous man, or the sayer and doer of unholy things, had far better not be encouraged in the illusion that his roguery is clever; for men glory in their shame—they fancy that they hear others saying of them, 'These are not mere good-for-nothing persons, mere burdens of the earth, but such as men should be who mean to dwell safely in a state.' Let us tell them that they are all the more truly what they do not think they are because they do not know it; for they do not know the penalty of injustice, which above all things they ought to know—not stripes and death, as they suppose, which evil-doers often escape, but a penalty which cannot be escaped.

Theod. What is that?

Soc. There are two patterns eternally set before them; the one blessed and divine, the other godless and wretched: but they do not see them, or perceive that in their utter folly and infatuation they are growing like the one and unlike the other, by reason of their evil deeds; and the penalty is, that they lead a life answering to the pattern which they are growing like. And if we tell them, that unless they depart from their cunning, the place of innocence will not receive them after death; and that here on earth, they will live ever in the likeness of their own selves, and with evil friends—when they hear this they in their superior cunning will seem to be listening to the talk of idiots.

Theod. Very true, Socrates.

Soc. Too true, my friend, as I well know; there is, however, one peculiarity in their case: when they begin to reason in private about their dislike of philosophy, if they have the courage to hear the argument out, and do not run away, they grow at last strangely discontented with themselves; their rhetoric fades away, and they become helpless as children. These however are digressions from which we must now desist, or they will overflow, and drown the original argument; to which, if you please, we will now return.

Theod. For my part, Socrates, I would rather have the digressions, for at my age I find them easier to follow; but if you wish, let us go back to the argument.

SOPHIST

The pre-Socratic Philosophers and their puzzles.

The Sophist, like the Parmenides, deals with metaphysical problems and puzzles, and with the Doctrine of the Ideas. The form which it takes is an enquiry into the nature and character of the Sophist or pretender to wisdom, who is exhibited in an odious light as the opposite to the true philosopher, ambitious, shallow, mercenary, disputatious, a sorcerer who makes that which is not appear to be.

But, the question is asked, how can 'not-being' exist? This, which seems to us an almost meaningless fallacy, was to Plato and his contemporaries a real philosophical difficulty. And accordingly he proceeds to show that the separation of the spheres of the absolute and the relative, of being and not-being, which had been taught by Parmenides and his followers, could not be maintained. All ideas are not incompatible, although some are. Being, for instance, partakes both of rest and motion; whereas rest and motion are inconsistent. Not-being is only the negation of being, just as not-motion or rest is the negation of motion.

In the course of the discussion Plato gives a sketch of the history of Greek philosophy, which is interesting in itself, and is also the first attempt of the kind which is known to us. It is, as we might expect, only an outline of which we are left to fill up the details to the best of our power. Plato divides the philosophers who preceded him into several schools or sects:—

- (1) The early Ionian philosophers, like Pherecydes (B.C. 560), who maintained the existence of two or three principles, such as heat and cold, moist and dry, and declared that these were sometimes united and sometimes at strife:
- (a) The Eleatics, who derived their origin from Xenophanes (B.c. 540), and Parmenides (B.c. 504), and taught that 'the many was also one,' and 'asserted the unity of the Universe':
- (3) 'The Ionian and Sicilian Muses' (Heracleitus, B. c. 504), and Empedocles (B. c. 443), who combined the tenets of Pherecydes and the Eleatics; Heracleitus affirming that plurality and unity were in perpetual process of union and division by love and hate, while Empedocles supposed that they were in regular alternation to each other.

These somewhat crude and primitive philosophers were succeeded by more subtle teachers, whom Plato regards as his principal opponents. He has not clearly stated to whom he is referring; but he appears to have in view chiefly the Megarian School, or, possibly, the early Cynics, who delighted in verbal questions and disputes about being and not-being, and 'found no end, in wandering mazes lost.'

Lastly, there were the Idealists, by whom is probably intended a School who held in some form a Doctrine of Ideas; and the fierce and uncouth sect of the Materialists, who dragged heaven to earth, and believed in nothing except the evidence of their senses.

Into the midst of this warfare of words Plato has to descend. His object is not so much to put forward opinions of his own, as to gain from the different combatants the truest part of that for which they were fighting. He was by temperament an Eclectic, in the best sense of the term, and during the whole of his life, we find him indefatigable in the search after truth, and ready to welcome her from whatever side she appeared.

Steph. Stranger. Will you forgive me, and, as your words imply, not be altogether displeased if I flinch a little from the grasp of such a sturdy argument?

'The principal character in this dialogue is taken by a Stranger from Elea, 'a disciple of Parmenides and Zeno, and a true philosopher.' Theaetetus. To be sure I will.

Str. I have a yet more urgent request to make.

Theaet. Which is -?

Str. That you will promise not to regard me as a parricide.

Theaet. And why?

Str. Because, in self-defence, I must test the philosophy of my father Parmenides, and try to prove by main force that in a certain sense not-being is, and that being, on the other hand, is not.

Theaet. Some attempt of the kind is clearly needed.

Str. Yes, a blind man, as they say, might see that, and, unless these questions are decided in one way or another, no one when he speaks of false words, or false opinion, or idols, or images, or imitations, or appearances, or about the arts which are concerned with them, can avoid falling into ridiculous contradictions.

Theaet. Most true.

Str. And therefore I must venture to lay hands on 242 my father's argument; for if I am to be over-scrupulous, I shall have to give the matter up.

Theaet. Nothing in the world should ever induce us to do so.

Str. I have a third little request which I wish to make.

Theaet. What is it?

Str. You heard me say what I have always felt and still feel—that I have no heart for this argument? Theaet. I did.

Str. I tremble at the thought of what I have said, and expect that you will deem me mad, when you hear of my sudden changes and shiftings; let me therefore observe, that I am examining the question entirely out of regard for you.

222 SOPHIST

Theaet. There is no reason for you to fear that I shall impute any impropriety to you, if you attempt this refutation and proof; take heart, therefore, and proceed.

Str. And where shall I begin the perilous enterprise? I think that the road which I must take is—
Theaet. Which?—Let me hear.

Str. I think that we had better, first of all, consider the points which at present are regarded as self-evident, lest we may have fallen into some confusion, and be too ready to assent to one another, fancying that we are quite clear about them.

Theaet. Say more distinctly what you mean.

Str. I think that Parmenides, and all who ever yet undertook to determine the number and nature of existences, talked to us in rather a light and easy strain.

Theaet. How?

Str. As if we had been children, to whom they repeated each his own mythus or story;—one said that there were three principles, and that at one time there was war between certain of them; and then again there was peace, and they were married and begat children. and brought them up; and another spoke of two principles,—a moist and a dry, or a hot and a cold, and made them marry and cohabit. The Eleatics. however, in our part of the world, say that all things are many in name, but in nature one: this is their mythus, which goes back to Xenophanes, and is even older. Then there are Ionian, and in more recent times Sicilian muses, who have arrived at the conclusion that to unite the two principles is safer, and to say that being is one and many, and that these are held together by enmity and friendship, ever parting, ever meeting, as the severer Muses assert, while the gentler ones do not insist on the perpetual strife and peace, but admit a relaxation and alternation of them; peace 243 and unity sometimes prevailing under the sway of Aphrodite, and then again plurality and war, by reason of a principle of strife. Whether any of them spoke the truth in all this is hard to determine; besides, antiquity and famous men should have reverence, and not be liable to accusations so serious. Yet one thing may be said of them without offence—

Theaet. What thing?

Str. That they went on their several ways disdaining to notice people like ourselves; they did not care whether they took us with them, or left us behind them.

Theaet. How do you mean?

Str. I mean to say, that when they talk of one, two, or more elements, which are or have become or are becoming, or again of heat mingling with cold, assuming in some other part of their works separations and mixtures,—tell me, Theaetetus, do you understand what they mean by these expressions? When I was a younger man, I used to fancy that I understood quite well what was meant by the term 'not-being,' which is our present subject of dispute; and now you see in what a fix we are about it.

Theaet, I see.

Str. And very likely we have been getting into the same perplexity about 'being,' and yet may fancy that when anybody utters the word, we understand him quite easily, although we do not know about not-being. But we may be equally ignorant of both.

Theaet. I dare say.

Str. And the same may be said of all the terms just mentioned.

Theaet. True.

Str. The consideration of most of them may be deferred; but we had better now discuss the chief captain and leader of them.

Theaet. Of what are you speaking? You clearly think that we must first investigate what people mean by the word 'being.'

Str. You follow close at my heels, Theaetetus. For the right method, I conceive, will be to call into our presence the dualistic philosophers and to interrogate them. 'Come,' we will say, 'Ye, who affirm that hot and cold or any other two principles are the universe, what is this term which you apply to both of them, and what do you mean when you say that both and each of them "are"? How are we to understand the word "are"? Upon your view, are we to suppose that there is a third principle over and above the other two,—three in all, and not two? For clearly you cannot say that one of the two principles is being, and yet attribute being equally to both of them; for, if you did, whichever of the two is identified with being, will comprehend the other; and so they will be one and not two.'

Theaet. Very true.

Str. But perhaps you mean to give the name of 'being' to both of them together?

Theaet. Quite likely.

²⁴⁴ Str. 'Then, friends,' we shall reply to them, 'the answer is plainly that the two will still be resolved into one.'

Theaet. Most true.

Str. 'Since, then, we are in a difficulty, please to tell us what you mean, when you speak of being; for there can be no doubt that you always from the first understood your own meaning, whereas we once thought that we understood you, but now we are in a great strait. Please to begin by explaining this matter to

us, and let us no longer fancy that we understand you, when we entirely misunderstand you.' There will be no impropriety in our demanding an answer to this question, either of the dualists or of the pluralists?

Theaet. Certainly not.

Str. And what about the assertors of the oneness of the all—must we not endeavour to ascertain from them what they mean by 'being'?

Theaet. By all means.

Str. Then let them answer this question: One, you say, alone is? 'Yes,' they will reply.

Theaet. True.

Str. And there is something which you call 'being'? Theaet. 'Yes.'

Str. And is being the same as one, and do you apply two names to the same thing?

Theaet. What will be their answer, Stranger?

Str. It is clear, Theaetetus, that he who asserts the unity of being will find a difficulty in answering this or any other question.

Theaet. Why so?

Str. To admit of two names, and to affirm that there is nothing but unity, is surely ridiculous?

Theaet. Certainly.

Str. And equally irrational to admit that a name is anything?

Theaet. How so?

Str. To distinguish the name from the thing, implies duality.

Theaet. Yes.

Str. And yet he who identifies the name with the thing will be compelled to say that it is the name of nothing, or if he says that it is the name of something, even then the name will only be the name of a name, and of nothing else.

Theaet. True.

Str. And the one will turn out to be only one of one, 'and being absolute unity, will represent a mere name'.

Theaet. Certainly.

Str. And would they say that the whole is other than the one that is, or the same with it?

Theaet. To be sure they would, and they actually say so.

Str. If being is a whole, as Parmenides sings,-

'Every way like unto the fulness of a well-rounded sphere, Evenly balanced from the centre on every side, And must needs be neither greater nor less in any way, Neither on this side nor on that—'

then being has a centre and extremes, and, having these, must also have parts.

Theaet. True.

Str. Yet that which has parts may have the attribute of unity in all the parts, and in this way being all and a whole, may be one?

Theaet. Certainly.

Str. But that of which this is the condition cannot be absolute unity?

Theaet. Why not?

Str. Because, according to right reason, that which is truly one must be affirmed to be absolutely indivisible.

Theaet. Certainly.

Str. But this indivisible, if made up of many parts, will contradict reason.

Theaet. I understand.

Str. Shall we say that being is one and a whole, because it has the attribute of unity? Or shall we say that being is not a whole at all?

¹ Reading with the MSS. καὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτὸ ἐν ὄν.

² Reading τὸ ὄν.

Theaet. That is a hard alternative to offer.

Str. Most true; for being, having in a certain sense the attribute of one, is yet proved not to be the same as one, and the all is therefore more than one.

Theaet. Yes.

Str. And yet if being be not a whole, through having the attribute of unity, and there be such a thing as an absolute whole, being lacks something of its own nature?

Theaet. Certainly.

Str. Upon this view, again, being, having a defect of being, will become not-being?

Theaet. True.

Str. And, again, the all becomes more than one, for being and the whole will each have their separate nature.

Theaet, Yes.

Str. But if the whole does not exist at all, all the previous difficulties remain the same, and there will be the further difficulty, that besides having no being, being can never have come into being.

Theaet. Why so?

Str. Because that which comes into being always comes into being as a whole, so that he who does not give whole a place among beings, cannot speak either of essence or generation as existing.

Theaet. Yes, that certainly appears to be true.

Str. Again; how can that which is not a whole have any quantity? For that which is of a certain quantity must necessarily be the whole of that quantity.

Theaet. Exactly.

Str. And there will be innumerable other points, each of them causing infinite trouble to him who says that being is either one or two.

Theaet. The difficulties which are dawning upon us prove this; for one objection connects with another,

228 SOPHIST

and they are always involving what has preceded in a greater and worse perplexity.

Str. We are far from having exhausted the more exact thinkers who treat of being and not-being. But let us be content to leave them, and proceed to view 246 those who speak less precisely; and we shall find as the result of all, that the nature of being is quite as difficult to comprehend as that of not-being.

Theaet. Then now we will go to the others.

Str. There appears to be a sort of war of Giants and Gods going on amongst them; they are fighting with one another about the nature of essence.

Theaet. How is that?

Str. Some of them are dragging down all things from heaven and from the unseen to earth, and they literally grasp in their hands rocks and oaks; of these they lay hold, and obstinately maintain, that the things only which can be touched or handled have being or essence, because they define being and body as one, and if any one else says that what is not a body exists they altogether despise him, and will hear of nothing but body.

Theaet. I have often met with such men, and terrible fellows they are.

Str. And that is the reason why their opponents cautiously defend themselves from above, out of an unseen world, mightily contending that true essence consists of certain intelligible and incorporeal ideas; the bodies of the materialists, which by them are maintained to be the very truth, they break up into little bits by their arguments, and affirm them to be, not essence, but generation and motion. Between the two armies, Theaetetus, there is always an endless conflict raging concerning these matters.

Theaet. True.

Str. Let us ask each party in turn, to give an account of that which they call essence.

Theaet. How shall we get it out of them?

Str. With those who make being to consist in ideas, there will be less difficulty, for they are civil people enough; but there will be very great difficulty, or rather an absolute impossibility, in getting an opinion out of those who drag everything down to matter. Shall I tell you what we must do?

Theaet. What?

Str. Let us, if we can, really improve them; but if this is not possible, let us imagine them to be better than they are, and more willing to answer in accordance with the rules of argument, and then their opinion will be more worth having; for that which better men acknowledge has more weight than that which is acknowledged by inferior men. Moreover we are no respecters of persons, but seekers after truth.

STATESMAN

The Reign of Cronos.

The Statesman is a companion piece to the Sophist, which it much resembles in style and manner of treatment. It contains a picture of the ideal statesman or ruler who is 'set over against' his rival, the mere politician. The true king or statesman is the superior of his fellow citizens, and governs them by knowledge and not by power. His rule is better than that of the law: for the law is fixed and nnbending, whereas the individual can allow himself to be guided by circumstances. But since this 'king by nature' is scarcely or never to be found among men (Arist. Pol. v. 10, § 37), they prefer to submit to one of the various 'imperfect forms of government.'

There was an age, however, when mankind was ruled in the true sense of the word. This was in the time of Cronos, those happy days during which the human race lived in Paradisiacal innocence under the government of Divine Shepherds, who were

appointed by Cronos himself. Our present and far inferior state is due to the revolutions of the Universe.

In the beginning, the course of the world was guided by the hand of God; but when the appointed number of generations had been born from the earth and had returned again to her, the Creator ceased His directing care; the Universe fell to chaos, and all living creatures perished. A new race succeeded; the evil which is inherent in matter reasserted itself, and the world went from bad to worse, until the Creator at last again interposed, and restored order to creation. At the same time He introduced a new principle of life; the earth no longer brought forth men and animals, but they reproduced their species, each after their kind. Men were at first poor and helpless; gradually, however, by the aid of the Gods, they learned the arts of life and formed themselves into communities.

In this remarkable myth Plato, while adding confirmation by the example of the rule of Cronos to the argument respecting the true nature of government, is also enabled to set forth in a poetical form his solution of two different problems which seem to have been a frequent subject of his thoughts—(1) the existence of evil, and (2) the growth of human society.

- (1) He is sorely perplexed, as men have been in all ages, by the existence of evil in the Universe. He saw everywhere the marks of design; yet the efforts of the Designer appeared liable to be thwarted by some malignant influence. And this power or principle of evil he supposed to be, not a 'Prince of Darkness,' who was opposed on almost equal terms to the Deity, but an inherent quality of matter, against which even the Creator was not wholly able to contend. Hence also he was led to place between the Creator and the Creation an intermediate order of divine beings—the δαίμονες of the Platonic philosophy—who execute 'their Father's will in the best and wisest manner which they cau' (cp. Tim. 4x foll.).
- (a) The growth of civilization was a subject of much curiosity to the Greeks. Their lively and reflective minds were deeply stirred by what they were able to learn of the ancient history of the East and of Egypt. They felt how truly they might be called a 'race of children'; for their national history was brief and hardly more than a mass of inconsistent legends and traditions, while the Egyptian priests could recite to Herodotus the names of '330 kings who reigned in Egypt between the days of Menes and his own time' (ii. 100). Moreover, short and imperfect as was their knowledge of the events of the past, they were well aware that great revolutions had happened, and that kingdoms which had once been powerful had fallen into decay, while others had succeeded in their place.

They were easily led, therefore, to the conclusion that 'there had been many destructions of mankind,' and that civilization had grown up by slow and painful efforts among the survivors of some deluge or other catastrophe, such as had become familiar to their minds from the legends of the deluges of Ogyges and Deucalion or the destruction of the earth by Phaethon (Tim. 22 C). Plato recurs once more to this subject in the Third Book of the Laws, where we shall find him treating of the manner in which the several forms of government may be supposed to have developed among men.

Stranger¹. Let us make a new beginning, and travel Steph. by a different road.

Young Socrates. What road?

Str. I think that we may have a little amusement; there is a famous tale, of which a good portion may with advantage be interwoven, and then we may resume our series of divisions, and proceed in the old path until we arrive at the desired summit. Shall we do as I say?

Y. Soc. By all means.

Str. Listen, then, to a tale which a child would love to hear; and you are not too old for childish amusement.

Y. Soc. Let me hear

Str. There did really happen, and will again happen, like many other events of which ancient tradition has preserved the record, the portent which is traditionally said to have occurred in the quarrel of Atreus and Thyestes. You have heard, no doubt, and remember what they say happened at that time?

Y. Soc. I suppose you to mean the token of the birth of the golden lamb.

Str. No, not that; but another part of the story, 269 which tells how the sun and the stars once rose in the west, and set in the east, and that the god reversed

¹ The conversation is between the Eleatic Stranger of the 'Sophist' and the younger Socrates, who is not a relation of his namesake.

their motion, and gave them that which they now have as a testimony to the right of Atreus.

Y. Soc. Yes; there is that legend also.

Str. Again, we have been often told of the reign of Cronos.

Y. Soc. Yes, very often.

Str. Did you ever hear that the men of former times were earth-born, and not begotten of one another?

Y. Soc. Yes, that is another old tradition.

Str. All these stories, and ten thousand others which are still more wonderful, have a common origin; many of them have been lost in the lapse of ages, or are repeated only in a disconnected form; but the origin of them is what no one has told, and may as well be told now; for the tale is suited to throw light on the nature of the king.

Y. Soc. Very good; and I hope that you will give the whole story, and leave out nothing.

Str. Listen, then. There is a time when God himself guides and helps to roll the world in its course; and there is a time, on the completion of a certain cycle, when he lets go, and the world being a living creature, and having originally received intelligence from its author and creator, turns about and by an inherent necessity revolves in the opposite direction.

Y. Soc. Why is that?

Str. Why, because only the most divine things of all remain ever unchanged and the same, and body is not included in this class. Heaven and the universe, as we have termed them, although they have been endowed by the Creator with many glories, partake of a bodily nature, and therefore cannot be entirely free from perturbation. But their motion is, as far as possible, single and in the same place, and of the same kind; and is therefore only subject to a reversal, which is the

least alteration possible. For the lord of all moving things is alone able to move of himself; and to think that he moves them at one time in one direction and at another time in another is blasphemy. Hence we must not say that the world is either self-moved always, or all made to go round by God in two opposite courses: or that two Gods, having opposite purposes, make it 270 move round. But, as I have already said, (and this is the only remaining alternative) the world is guided at one time by an external power which is divine and receives fresh life and immortality from the renewing hand of the Creator, and again, when let go, moves spontaneously, being set free at such a time as to have. during infinite cycles of years, a reverse movement: this is due to its perfect balance, to its vast size, and to the fact that it turns on the smallest pivot.

Y. Soc. Your account of the world seems to be very reasonable indeed.

Str. Let us now reflect and try to gather from what has been said the nature of the phenomenon which we affirmed to be the cause of all these wonders. It is this.

Y. Soc. What?

Str. The reversal which takes place from time to time of the motion of the universe.

Y. Soc. How is that the cause?

Str. Of all changes of the heavenly motions, we may consider this to be the greatest and most complete.

Y. Soc. I should imagine so.

Str. And it may be supposed to result in the greatest changes to the human beings who are the inhabitants of the world at the time.

Y. Soc. Such changes would naturally occur.

Str. And animals, as we know, survive with difficulty great and serious changes of many different kinds when they come upon them at once.

Y. Soc. Very true.

Str. Hence there necessarily occurs a great destruction of them, which extends also to the life of man; few survivors of the race are left, and those who remain become the subjects of several novel and remarkable phenomena, and of one in particular, which takes place at the time when the transition is made to the cycle opposite to that in which we are now living.

Y. Soc. What is it?

Str. The life of all animals first came to a standstill, and the mortal nature ceased to be or look older, and was then reversed and grew young and delicate; the white locks of the aged darkened again, and the cheeks of the bearded man became smooth, and recovered their former bloom; the bodies of youths in their prime grew softer and smaller, continually by day and night returning and becoming assimilated to the nature of a newlyborn child in mind as well as body; in the succeeding stage they wasted away and wholly disappeared. And the bodies of those who died by violence at that time quickly passed through the like changes, and in a few days were no more seen.

271 Y. Soc. Then how, Stranger, were the animals created in those days; and in what way were they begotten of one another?

Str. It is evident, Socrates, that there was no such thing in the then order of nature as the procreation of animals from one another; the earth-born race, of which we hear in story, was the one which existed in those days—they rose again from the ground; and of this tradition, which is now-a-days often unduly discredited, our ancestors, who were nearest in point of time to the end of the last period and came into being at the beginning of this, are to us the heralds. And mark how consistent the sequel of the tale is; after the

return of age to youth, follows the return of the dead, who are lying in the earth, to life; simultaneously with the reversal of the world the wheel of their generation has been turned back, and they are put together and rise and live in the opposite order, unless God has carried any of them away to some other lot. According to this tradition they of necessity sprang from the earth and have the name of earth-born, and so the above legend clings to them.

Y. Soc. Certainly that is quite consistent with what has preceded; but tell me, was the life which you said existed in the reign of Cronos in that cycle of the world, or in this? For the change in the course of the stars and the sun must have occurred in both.

Str. I see that you enter into my meaning;—no, that blessed and spontaneous life does not belong to the present cycle of the world, but to the previous one, in which God superintended the whole revolution of the universe; and the several parts of the universe were distributed under the rule of certain inferior deities, as is the way in some places still. There were demigods, who were the shepherds of the various species and herds of animals, and each one was in all respects sufficient for those of whom he was the shepherd; neither was there any violence, or devouring of one another, or war or quarrel among them; and I might tell of ten thousand other blessings, which belonged to that dispensation.

The reason why the life of man was, as tradition says, spontaneous, is as follows: In those days God himself was their shepherd, and ruled over them, just as man, who is by comparison a divine being, still rules over the lower animals. Under him there were no forms of government or separate possession of women and children; for all men rose again from the 272

earth, having no memory of the past. And although they had nothing of this sort, the earth gave them fruits in abundance, which grew on trees and shrubs unbidden, and were not planted by the hand of man. And they dwelt naked, and mostly in the open air, for the temperature of their seasons was mild; and they had no beds, but lay on soft couches of grass, which grew plentifully out of the earth. Such was the life of man in the days of Cronos, Socrates; the character of our present life, which is said to be under Zeus, you know from your own experience. Can you, and will you, determine which of them you deem the happier?

Y. Soc. Impossible.

Str. Then shall I determine for you as well as I can? Y. Soc. By all means.

Str. Suppose that the nurslings of Cronos, having this boundless leisure, and the power of holding intercourse, not only with men, but with the brute creation, had used all these advantages with a view to philosophy, conversing with the brutes as well as with one another. and learning of every nature which was gifted with any special power, and was able to contribute some special experience to the store of wisdom, there would be no difficulty in deciding that they would be a thousand times happier than the men of our own day. Or, again, if they had merely eaten and drunk until they were full. and told stories to one another and to the animalssuch stories as are now attributed to them-in this case also, as I should imagine, the answer would be easy. But until some satisfactory witness can be found of the love of that age for knowledge and discussion, we had better let the matter drop, and give the reason why we have unearthed this tale, and then we shall be able to get on.

In the fulness of time, when the change was to take

place, and the earth-born race had all perished, and every soul had completed its proper cycle of births and been sown in the earth her appointed number of times, the pilot of the universe let the helm go, and retired to his place of view; and then Fate and innate desire reversed the motion of the world. Then also all the inferior deities who share the rule of the supreme power, being informed of what was happening, let go the parts of the world which were under their control. And the world turning round with a sudden shock, 273 being impelled in an opposite direction from beginning to end, was shaken by a mighty earthquake, which wrought a new destruction of all manner of animals. Afterwards, when sufficient time had elapsed, the tumult and confusion and earthquake ceased, and the universal creature, once more at peace, attained to a calm, and settled down into his own orderly and accustomed course, having the charge and rule of himself and of all the creatures which are contained in him, and executing, as far as he remembered them, the instructions of his Father and Creator, more precisely at first, but afterwards with less exactness.

The reason of the falling off was the admixture of matter in him; this was inherent in the primal nature, which was full of disorder, until attaining to the present order. From God, the constructor, the world received all that is good in him, but from a previous state came elements of evil and unrighteousness, which, thence derived, first of all passed into the world, and were then transmitted to the animals. While the world was aided by the pilot in nurturing the animals, the evil was small, and great the good which he produced, but after the separation, when the world was let go, at first all proceeded well enough; but, as time went on, there was more and more forgetting, and the old discord

again held sway and burst forth in full glory; and at last small was the good, and great was the admixture of evil, and there was a danger of universal ruin to the world, and to the things contained in him. Wherefore God, the orderer of all, in his tender care, seeing that the world was in great straits, and fearing that all might be dissolved in the storm and disappear in infinite chaos, again seated himself at the helm; and bringing back the elements which had fallen into dissolution and disorder to the motion which had prevailed under his dispensation, he set them in order and restored them, and made the world imperishable and immortal.

And this is the whole tale, of which the first part will suffice to illustrate the nature of the king. For when the world turned towards the present cycle of generation, the age of man again stood still, and a change opposite to the previous one was the result. The small creatures which had almost disappeared grew in stature, and the newly-born children of the earth became grey and died and sank into the earth 274 again. All things changed, imitating and following the condition of the universe, and of necessity agreeing with that in their mode of conception and generation and nurture; for no animal was any longer allowed to come into being in the earth through the agency of other creative beings, but as the world was ordained to be the lord of his own progress, in like manner the parts were ordained to grow and generate and give nourishment, as far as they could, of themselves, impelled by a similar movement.

And so we have arrived at the real end of this discourse; for although there might be much to tell of the lower animals, and of the condition out of which they changed and of the causes of the change, about

men there is not much, and that little is more to the purpose. Deprived of the care of God, who had possessed and tended them, they were left helpless and defenceless, and were torn in pieces by the beasts, who were naturally fierce and had now grown wild. And in the first ages they were still without skill or resource; the food which once grew spontaneously had failed, and as yet they knew not how to procure it. because they had never felt the pressure of necessity. For all these reasons they were in a great strait: wherefore also the gifts spoken of in the old tradition were imparted to man by the gods, together with so much teaching and education as was indispensable: fire was given to them by Prometheus, the arts by Hephaestus and his fellow-worker, Athene, seeds and plants by others. From these is derived all that has helped to frame human life; since the care of the Gods, as I was saying, had now failed men, and they had to order their course of life for themselves, and were their own masters, just like the universal creature whom they imitate and follow, ever changing, as he changes, and ever living and growing, at one time in one manner, and at another time in another.

PHILEBUS

The first Taste of Logic. The Art of Dialectic.

THE Philebus is one of the more purely metaphysical dialogues of Plato, and was probably composed in his later years. The subject of the work may be briefly said to be,—'Pleasure in relation to Knowledge and to the Good,' or, 'The place of Pleasure in the life of man.' Pleasures are divided into two classes, the pure and the impure kind; the latter have no part in the virtuous life; the former are allowed, but are placed last in the scale of goods. First comes

measure; second, symmetry; third, reason; fourth, knowledge; fifth, the pure pleasures.

The passage which follows does not relate to the principal thesis of the dialogue, but is rather an account of the method in which Plato thinks that such an enquiry should be pursued. This is the 'Dialectic' of which we so often hear in the Platonic writings. Yet there is a difference in his language in the Philebus when compared with that which he employs in other works, and especially in the Republic and Symposium. In these dialogues Dialectic is spoken of as the 'steps' by which we mount from sensible objects to the contemplation of true being or the eternal beauty. This vague conception is not further explained by Plato in the Republic, and in the Sophist, the Statesman, and the Philebus, he returns to the more prosaic notion of Dialectic which he has already stated in the Phaedrus, where it is said to be the art by which the philosopher is enabled to divide things into their species, 'according to the natural formation, where the joint is, not breaking any part as a bad carver might' (265 E).

It is, therefore, a logical process of division and subdivision, closely analogous to what Aristotle calls his 'customary method by which the compound is resolved into the elements or least parts of the whole' (Pol. i. 1, § 3). This seems to have been merely a passing phase of Plato's philosophy, when in his 'warfare on behalf of mind' he felt the necessity, as he himself expresses it, 'of having weapons of another make from those which he used before' (Phil. 23 C). In the Laws Dialectic occupies a far less important place, and is only the name given to the mode of carrying on the argument by question and answer, which affords a 'suitable pastime' for the days of old age (vii. 820 C).

Steph. Socrates. Good; and where shall we begin this great and multifarious battle, in which such various points are at issue? Shall we begin thus?

Protarchus. How?

Soc. We say that the one and many become identified by thought, and that now, as in time past, they run about together, in and out of every word which is uttered, and that this union of them will never cease, and is not now beginning, but is, as I believe, an everlasting quality of thought itself, which never grows old. Any young man, when he first tastes these subtleties, is delighted, and fancies that he has found a treasure of wisdom; in the first enthusiasm of his joy he leaves no stone, or rather no thought unturned, now rolling up the many into the one, and kneading them together, now unfolding and dividing them; he puzzles himself first and above all, and then he proceeds to puzzle his neighbours, whether they are older or younger, or of his 16 own age—that makes no difference; neither father nor mother does he spare; no human being who has ears is safe from him, hardly even his dog, and a barbarian would have no chance of escaping him, if an interpreter could only be found.

Pro. Considering, Socrates, how many we are, and that all of us are young men, is there not a danger that we and Philebus may all set upon you, if you abuse us? We understand what you mean; but is there no charm by which we may dispel all this confusion, no more excellent way of arriving at the truth? If there is, we hope that you will guide us into that way, and we will do our best to follow, for the enquiry in which we are engaged, Socrates, is not unimportant.

Soc. The reverse of unimportant, my boys, as Philebus calls you, and there neither is nor ever will be a better than my own favourite way, which has nevertheless already often deserted me and left me helpless in the hour of need.

Pro. Tell us what that is.

Soc. One which may be easily pointed out, but is by no means easy of application; it is the parent of all the discoveries in the arts.

Pro. Tell us what it is.

Soc. A gift of heaven, which, as I conceive, the gods tossed among men by the hands of a new Prometheus, and therewith a blaze of light; and the ancients, who were our betters and nearer the gods than we are,

handed down the tradition, that whatever things are said to be are composed of one and many, and have the finite and infinite implanted in them: seeing, then, that such is the order of the world, we too ought in every enquiry to begin by laying down one idea of that which is the subject of enquiry; this unity we shall find in everything. Having found it, we may next proceed to look for two, if there be two, or, if not, then for three or some other number, subdividing each of these units, until at last the unity with which we began is seen not only to be one and many and infinite, but also a definite number: the infinite must not be suffered to approach the many until the entire number of the species intermediate between unity and infinity has been discovered, —then, and not till then, we may rest from division, and without further troubling ourselves about the endless individuals may allow them to drop into infinity.

This, as I was saying, is the way of considering and learning and teaching one another, which the gods have 17 handed down to us. But the wise men of our time are either too quick or too slow in conceiving plurality in unity. Having no method, they make their one and many anyhow, and from unity pass at once to infinity; the intermediate steps never occur to them. And this, I repeat, is what makes the difference between the mere art of disputation and true dialectic.

Oxford

PRINTED AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

BY HORACE HART, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

